

# U.S.I. JOURNAL

INDIA'S OLDEST JOURNAL ON DEFENCE AFFAIRS

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science, and literature  
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in general and of the  
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## EDITORIAL

India, a founder member of the United Nations, has viewed the world body's ideals, principles and objectives as a central pillar of a just and peaceful world order. India's active role in the world body is manifested in its willing participation in all UN activities, including peacekeeping operations. From Korea in the 1950s to the ongoing operations in Sierra Leone, Indian troops have contributed with dedication to the cause of world peace. Over 50,000 Indian soldiers have participated in 32 of the 48 peacekeeping missions undertaken by the UN over the last fifty years or so. And as many as 94 Indian soldiers have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the United Nations.

From 13 to 15 September 2000, the USI hosted the Sixth International Seminar in the series *Peacekeeping and Peace Support into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the theme being "Peacekeeping 2015: A Perspective". Thirty foreign participants from Argentina, Australia, Canada, Japan, Jordan, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Sweden, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, representatives of the Department of UN Peacekeeping Operations in New York, the International Peace Academy in New York, and of the United Nations Information Centre and the International Committee of the Red Cross in New Delhi, participated in the Seminar. India was represented by a distinguished team of diplomats and 38 Service officers – both serving and retired – having experience in UN peacekeeping operations at different levels. Besides, observers from the three Services of the Indian Armed Forces, as well as from the Indian Police and the Paramilitary Forces also participated. The Seminar participants exchanged views on the issues of Regional Security Perspective, Preventive Diplomacy, Humanitarian Interventions and the Role of Developing Countries in International Peacekeeping and Peace Support.

General Ved Prakash Malik, PVSM, AVSM, ADC, the Chief of the Army Staff and Chairman Chiefs of Staff Committee, and Vice Patron of the USI, delivered the Keynote Address at the Seminar. He expressed reservations about the increasing importance being given to regional peacekeeping arrangements and highlighted that only the United Nations has the necessary moral authority to resolve inter- and intra-state conflicts. Laying special emphasis on a

comprehensive politico-military analysis before undertaking a peacekeeping mission, he suggested that the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations be staffed with the right mix of military and civilian officers to enable efficient planning, deployment, and management of operations. He also advocated that troop-contributing countries should be involved from the early stages of mission planning. General Malik announced the setting up of a Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping under the aegis of the United Service Institution of India at New Delhi. The centre would conduct courses for training of contingents of peacekeepers, military observers, and UN staff officers including those from friendly foreign countries. The lead article of the Journal, titled 'The Challenges of Peacekeeping and Peace Support,' has been excerpted from the Keynote Address by General Malik.

His Excellency Dr Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the 54th Session of the United Nations General Assembly and the Foreign Minister of Namibia, during his visit to New Delhi in August 2000, addressed USI members on the subject of 'UN Peacekeeping in the New Millennium'. Dr Gurirab commended India's contribution to the peacekeeping missions undertaken by the United Nations. Emphasising the importance of UN peacekeeping, he cited the vital role played by the UN peacekeepers in assisting his country in its transition from colonial rule to independence. The text of his talk has been published in this issue of the Journal.

Lt Gen R Sharma, PVSM, AVSM (Retd), in his article titled 'UN Peacekeeping on the Brink in Sierra Leone,' narrows down the focus on UN peacekeeping to the events in Sierra Leone. He portrays the unfolding events of the civil war in Sierra Leone and discusses the question of legality of the UN intervention. He categorises the UN mission in Sierra Leone as a 'second generation' peacekeeping operation, for which troops must be well armed and deployed in strength. They must also be empowered under Chapter VII of the UN Charter.

In his article titled 'Child Warriors of Sierra Leone,' Lt Col Sudhakar Jee, who was earlier deputed to the UNAMSIL, has focused on the phenomenon of 'Child Warriors' in the civil war in Sierra Leone. He gives a comprehensive overview of the conflict, identifies the factors that have led to the emergence of the child soldiers, and suggests various measures by which the situation may be remedied.



# The Challenges of Peacekeeping and Peace Support

GENERAL V P MALIK, PVSM, AVSM, ADC (RETD)

Since independence, India has traditionally given due importance to UN peacekeeping operations and has remained in the forefront of these activities, contributing towards the maintenance of international peace and security in different parts of the world.

Since their first commitment in Korea in 1950, Indian troops have participated in some of the most difficult UN operations and their professional excellence has won universal admiration. We have taken part in thirty two of the forty eight peacekeeping missions undertaken by the United Nations, and have contributed over 50,000 troops towards this. These include difficult UN operations in Congo, Mozambique, Cambodia, Somalia and, more recently, Lebanon and Sierra Leone.

The price of keeping the peace has, at times, been high. As many as ninety four of our soldiers have made the supreme sacrifice in the service of the United Nations. Their sacrifice personifies the ideals that India and the United Nations Organisation share and reflects our abiding commitment to the UN Charter.

Our Army has experience of operating over varied terrain, which is possibly unique in the world. Our operational deployment and sustainability ranges from snow-covered mountains and glaciers in the North to the vast deserts of Rajasthan, and from deep jungles of the North-East to the marine environment of our Island Territories. Today, the Indian Army has good experience in the entire spectrum of conflict, ranging from conventional warfare to low-intensity operations, including counter-insurgency operations and peacekeeping. We have kept ourselves updated on peacekeeping techniques based on past experiences and have a large reservoir of trained and skilled manpower.

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General V P Malik retired as the Chief of the Army Staff on 30 September 2000.

Excerpted from the Keynote Address delivered at the Sixth International Seminar in the series *Peacekeeping and Peace Support into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, the theme being *Peacekeeping 2015 : A Perspective*, held at the USI from 13 to 15 September 2000.

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We have always emphasised close rapport with the local population and have tried to understand their ethos. Impartiality, respect for human rights, ameliorating the lot of the sick, poor and oppressed, and to win the hearts and minds of the local populace are part of our philosophy of peacekeeping. Patience is our national trait and yet, when it has been necessary to use force, we have done it successfully, as in Congo, Somalia and more recently during "Operation Khukri" in Sierra Leone.

With our experience over the last 50 years, we have a well-developed strategic thought process and the requisite doctrinal support for UN peacekeeping which echoes this philosophy. India can sustain long-term deployment in UN peacekeeping missions. Our contingents have stand-alone capability in terms of organisational structure, assets, equipment and logistics. This was amply displayed in Somalia. We have again demonstrated our capacity to project an integrated force in Sierra Leone.

The post-Cold War era has seen changes in the character of conflicts that afflict the world today. Intra-state conflicts based on fierce claims of sub-nationalism, ethnic, religious and cultural identities are tearing apart nations that were once considered as stable societies. In many cases this has led to the break-down of political authority, crimes against humanity, mass killings and displacements of population. Discernible changes have taken place within the character of peacekeeping also. An increasing use of force and elements of coercion and intervention that sometime impinge on national sovereignty are evident. Peacekeeping operations have become multidimensional with political, humanitarian, social and economic components requiring civilians and Non-Governmental Organisations working hand-in-hand with the soldiers. Transnational terrorism and environmental issues have also exacerbated new conflicts. Is the UN today ready to face new challenges, is a question for us to ponder.

The UN system reflects the multilateral approach. The strength and limitations of this approach affect UN peacekeeping also. As a universal body, the UN can bring to bear its unique moral authority. But we cannot afford to be sucked into a conflict resolution situation because a few influential members desire so. There should

be a general consensus and support of a broad spectrum of the international community.

Similarly, one notices an increased importance being given to regional arrangements in peacekeeping. While we agree with the concept of regional representation in peacekeeping, we prefer peacekeeping under the UN command and control. The regional approach has some distinct handicaps in conflict resolution. Besides, we are not using the complete moral authority and experience of the universal body that the UN represents.

Regardless of technological progress and the changing character of conflict, the most important element of UN peacekeeping operations remains the soldier on the ground. This is especially so given the fact that UN operations are based on the minimum use of force, which require human qualities of tact, patience and diplomacy, rather than overwhelming force. We continue to believe that a well-trained, dedicated and disciplined soldier is the backbone of any peacekeeping operation.

### AREAS OF CONCERN

The past decade has clearly demonstrated the importance of UN peacekeeping operations. It has also brought out several lessons and areas of concern that need to be looked into to enhance UN Force capabilities and to meet future challenges. Some of the areas of concern are:-

(a) **Comprehensive Analysis.** Before launching any peacekeeping mission, a very careful politico-military analysis of the situation should be undertaken by the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO). To that extent, Somalia and now Sierra Leone are not good examples.

(b) **Efficient Planning.** The United Nations should be able to act in a timely and effective manner to ensure that missions are in place at the right time, with full components and sufficient resources to achieve the given objectives. We must not make any compromises on the scales of weapons and equipment. Operational effectiveness of the force must never be compromised due to political leverages. Successful accomplishment of 'Operation Khukri' in Sierra Leone bears testimony to this fact.

(c) **Management of Peacekeeping Operations.** The UN needs to have the ability to plan, deploy and manage such operations efficiently. To this end, staffing of UNDPKO with the right mix of military and civilian officials with experience in diplomacy, military affairs or any other qualifications to deal with specific requirements like logistics etc, is essential. We feel that all troop contributing countries should be given full representation in UNDPKO. The United Nations has a well laid out structure for command and control of peacekeeping operations which takes political, executive and military aspects into consideration. Unfortunately, the structure has come under strain, blurring of the chain of command, due to undesirable pressures from various quarters.

(d) **Consultations with Troops Contributing Countries.** Prospective troop contributing countries should be involved in the early stages of planning a mission. They should be consulted on any major decisions regarding the mandate. To this end, we welcome the type of interactions that took place on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) at UN HQ on 23 August 2000.

(e) **Tasking of Troops.** We should not be over-ambitious in tasking and deployment of troops. Besides, multinational peacekeepers will always require longer periods for orientation, though this can be reduced to some extent by proper training. Sierra Leone is a classical example.

(f) **Peacekeeping Training.** Another key area that requires immediate attention is the shortfall in the training standards of troops being contributed. While I am glad to learn that certain corrective steps have been initiated by the UNDPKO like the 'Train the Trainers' programme, a lot is yet to be achieved.

(g) **Equipping of Contingents.** Well-trained personnel need also to be well-equipped to perform efficiently. The new generation peacekeeping places much higher demands on logistics support than ever before. It is, therefore, the responsibility of the member states to ensure that their troops when deployed on UN missions are provided with the

necessary equipment and other logistics back-up and are well trained in their use to ensure efficient performance of the task as also personal safety and security.

(h) **Budgeting.** Last but not the least, participation in peacekeeping operations poses a considerable burden on the troops contributing countries. While we fully understand the precarious financial situation of the UN, caused by the non-payment of arrears and disproportionate shares of contribution by some countries, timely reimbursements to the troops contributing countries needs to be emphasised. To this end, member states must meet their charter obligations and pay their assessed contributions to the UN in time.

### CONCLUSION

We also appreciate and acknowledge the immense contribution made by other countries to UN peacekeeping, many of whom are represented here today. As I stressed earlier, UN peacekeeping is not a national undertaking. It is an international endeavour to which each nation brings its own unique contribution.

Over the next few days, you would have an opportunity to exchange views. We look forward to sharing and learning from each others' experience. We immensely value your views and contributions in this forum. We sincerely hope that this interaction and exchange of views would be equally interesting and rewarding to you. I wish you all a very pleasant and enjoyable stay in India.

In the furtherance of our initiative and support towards better peacekeeping, we have established, with the help of the USI and in particular Lt Gen Satish Nambiar its Director who himself is a veteran in peacekeeping, a 'Centre for UN Peacekeeping' at New Delhi. We shall be conducting peacekeeping training seminars, capsules, training of military observers and staff officers on a regular basis at this Centre, besides providing practical training to the troops who are likely to participate in peacekeeping operations. I wish the Centre full success in its future endeavours.

## UN Peacekeeping in the New Millennium

DR THEO-BEN GURIRAB

**D**uring my last visit to India in July 2000, both their Excellencies President Narayanan and Prime Minister Vajpayee received and shared their own insights and concerns with me on world affairs and particularly on the United Nations as well as their preoccupations with the concerns of the countries of the South. My esteemed colleague, Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Relations of India, extended cordial hospitality to me and my delegation. In our bilateral talks, we covered a wide range of issues affecting the global situation, relating to peace, security, development, globalisation and poverty eradication.

I come back as Namibia's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Information and Broadcasting as well as and in particular as President of the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly. By a unique and indeed a happy historic coincidence, I have the distinct honour to be presiding over the convergence of the end of a century and the end of a millennium; and welcoming the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the new millennium. As the longest serving Freedom Fighter at the United Nations and a graduate of our world body, I see more than a mere symbolism in all this; I am actually witnessing the triumph of human spirit and the power of international solidarity. It's a great honour for me and my country – Namibia – indeed.

Even before the formal proclamation of India's independence, you had placed the United Nations, its ideals, principles, objectives and goals at the centre in pursuit of mutually co-operative inter-state relations and foreign policy objectives. As far back as 1946, India had joined a handful of UN member states in successfully preventing the annexation of Namibia by the former racist and colonial South African regime. We had thus become comrades-in-arms in the anti-colonial struggle; we became fellow Freedom Fighters. In the ensuing

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Excerpted from the talk delivered at the United Service Institution of India on 18 August 2000.

His Excellency Dr Theo-Ben Gurirab is the President of the 54th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. He is concurrently Namibia's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Information and Broadcasting.

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years, South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) became a household name throughout India. I, once again, salute one and all in India for all that you did for Namibia's liberation and the achievement of our national independence.

From the early 1970s and 1980s, I was a frequent visitor to India in connection with Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit conferences and Ministerial meetings that were held from time to time in New Delhi. We credit India and its visionary leaders, Pundit Nehru foremost amongst them, for having joined other leaders from independent and non-independent countries alike, to create the Non-Aligned Movement in Belgrade in 1961 and later the Group of 77. Today these countries, now all of them independent states, constitute the largest bloc of the UN membership. Needless to add the fact that India is a valued leader and a resourceful champion in promoting the principles and purposes of the United Nations world-wide. India, in the words of Namibia's President Dr Sam Nujoma, deserves a place on the Security Council as a permanent member. This is overdue and the time is now. Namibia will offer all necessary support to India towards the realisation of that objective.

Our bilateral relations are excellent and continue to grow from strength to strength, beyond political solidarity and diplomatic consultations into the field of economic and commercial relations, as we both bring on board the private sector. The continuing exchange of high level political visits led by the Heads of State and Governments themselves have given greater significance to mutual support. The prospects for increased co-operation in the future look encouraging and call for new initiatives and action.

From Namibia's own experience before our independence in 1990 and particularly during the transition period in 1989, the United Nations stood by us, in word and deed, at all times. The United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), which included Indian nationals in its large contingent of UN peacemakers and peacekeepers, found willingness and co-operation from all Namibians regardless of political or social differences. Namibians were ready to embrace help and change, after many years of war, divisions and enmity.

Namibians wanted to seize the opportunity to get rid of the real enemy, namely colonialism and apartheid. From then onwards, we began to give content and direction to the policy of national reconciliation which has saved lives and preserves the peace and stability we enjoy today in Namibia. At the end, the UN left an independent country having achieved a remarkable success, which was made possible by us – Namibians.

In Cambodia, El Salvador and Mozambique, for example, UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding also achieved great successes and set the dynamics of change and renewal in process. Thereafter, it was left to the peoples themselves in those countries to build together for peace, human security and democracy. And we can see that there is an ongoing process of reconstruction and progress that involves the people. The UN has made a difference in the lives of the people. And it still can, if there is political will and material back-up.

In Sierra Leone, once the jewel of West Africa in the fields of learning and culture, United Nations peacekeeping efforts has run into a minefield of endless political bickering and military obstacles that are seemingly hard to overcome. In the meantime, innocent men, women and children continue to bleed and die. The country itself is being ruined. This is the challenging situation facing the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) today. Namibia currently serves on the UN Security Council and I am, therefore, quite aware of the difficulties. But I also see many acts of bravery and sacrifice in the field.

I have repeatedly made my views known publicly on this situation and will continue to do so as my contribution towards finding workable solutions and to help make Sierra Leone peaceful and governable again. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and Sankoh Foday cannot and will not succeed, they must be stopped and soon. The role of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) have been constructive and indispensable. This has prepared the ground for the UN operation to come in and assume its peacekeeping role. Regional struggle for power, the armed rebellion

of RUF and the lucrative trade in illicit diamonds have broken down the political system and the rule of law in Sierra Leone.

It has been said – and I agree – that in the field of peace and security preventive diplomacy and collective action save lives, resources and strengthen regional institutions! This is actually what the UN Charter had envisaged in 1945, namely "... to take effective collective measures for prevention and removal of threats to peace." We have seen that the UN peacekeeping operations in the field can be effective and successful when there is a consensus and joint action both by member states as well as the parties to the conflict.

What happened to the UN peacekeepers in Sierra Leone was a shame to the whole of the international community. Men in the field must never find themselves in a precarious situation like sitting ducks pitted against the mercy of war criminals and brutal armed bandits, like RUF in Sierra Leone or UNITA in Angola.

Africa is happy that an Indian contingent, consisting of an infantry battalion, an Engineer Unit and a Quick Reaction Force, belong to UNAMSIL. Once again, India has responded to Africa's hour of need in Sierra Leone. Today, I can hardly think of an African country where Indian medical doctors, lawyers, teachers, economists, specialists and technicians are not involved in the fight against poverty, hunger, unemployment and crime. Not to speak of those Africans who have been coming and continue to come to India for education, training and for further enhancement of their entrepreneurial skills. So, we say thanks to India for all this assistance and solidarity. And we offer our help in all those areas of interest and concern that India considers to be of vital national, regional and international importance.

I was amongst those who spoke out in the Security Council last month for the immediate and unconditional release of the 21 members of the Indian contingent who were held captive by the RUF terrorists. We are happy about their release on 6 July 2000 in Monrovia and relocation back in Freetown. At the same time, we painfully regret the death of Havildar Krishna Kumar and renew our condolences to the bereaved family and the Government of India.

The late Mr Kumar and other UN peacemakers and peacekeepers are shining role models and brave heroes in the eyes of the entire international community. We must not and we will not forget them. The United Nations must not fail them. The world must see to it that they are never exposed to half-hearted commitments and a lack of resources and tools they need to serve humanity and save lives everywhere.

At the United Nations, many delegations, the Secretary-General and I have repeatedly stressed the imperative need to review and streamline the existing policy of peacekeeping and introduce remedies for effectiveness and resources mobilisation for better performance. The Secretary-General's report on peacekeeping is eagerly awaited. The member states will have an opportunity, when it is published, to reflect on it and its recommendations. International peacekeeping is the primary responsibility of the UN. We must resist all unilateral actions. The Millennium Summit and the 55th Session of the General Assembly will be ideal occasions to discuss in depth peacekeeping and other burning issues on the international agenda towards a new beginning. I am certain that India and other developing countries will seize those opportunities to turn the situation around. Saving lives, poverty eradication and sustainable development are universal goals; but without world peace, these common yearnings of humankind will continue to remain on a back burner. We can and must do better.

The main theme of the forthcoming Millennium Summit is "The Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century." Under this overarching topic, world leaders will have a unique chance to discuss amongst themselves various topical and pressing problems menacing the entire global community. Let us hope that the millennium spirit will inspire world leaders with wisdom, courage and renewed commitment for action.

While it is good that the mandate of UNAMSIL was extended until 8 September 2000, we are, however, all anxious to see progress on the ground. In this context, the Security Council adopted a resolution on a special court for Sierra Leone to deal with crimes

against humanity and other crimes committed against the State as well as the people by the armed rebels and other culprits. This will not be an easy task but there is no alternative.

We hear that Washington is now willing to provide men, money and equipment for UNAMSIL to facilitate training of African members of the peacekeeping force. Let's hope the goods will be delivered soon and fully and without conditions.

As we enter the 21st Century and the new millennium, the world would like to see effective peacekeeping innovations and, indeed as President Franklin D Roosevelt put it in 1937, "positive endeavours to preserve peace in the world" in the interest of safeguarding humanity and our common civilisation.

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## UN Peacekeeping on the Brink in Sierra Leone!

LT GEN R SHARMA, PVSM, AVSM (RETD)

**U**N peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone on the brink of disaster? UN mission in peril in Sierra Leone! Indian troops fighting for other people's peace! Indian troops taken hostage by Sierra Leone rebels! 200 Indian troops rescued from a ten weeks rebel siege by a brilliant military operation."

The above are some snippets of media reporting on the UN intervention in Sierra Leone, expressing grave concern at the United Nations undertaking a major peacekeeping mission in an intra-state conflict, beyond its capability and jurisdiction. The national media has questioned the wisdom of committing Indian troops in an ill-conceived UN mission launched in a hazardous region. The UN in Sierra Leone has entered a minefield so to say. But this time it is a diamond minefield, which explains the heightened interests of the Western powers in the UN endeavour. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was launched in October 1999, and barely six months after the induction of troops the mission is imperilled – seven peacekeepers (Kenyans) were killed and more than 500 UN soldiers taken hostage. It is history repeating itself as in Somalia, where the mission ended in a disastrous failure and the UN quit leaving Somalians at peril. In Sierra Leone, the UN is raising the ante by increasing the force level to a record high of 13,000 troops, showing new resolve to prove its credibility. Intervention in Sierra Leone is a departure from the UN policy of not intervening in African strife-ridden failed states, stung by the experiences in Somalia, Angola and Rwanda. The change has come about, perhaps, after criticism that the US refuses to back UN intervention in Africa, as this part of the world is lower down on the American agenda. Now that UNAMSIL has been launched, Western powers want to see it through at all costs. Besides

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Lt Gen R Sharma is a former Deputy Chief of the Army Staff.

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supporting the enlarged UN mandate in this region, the British have joined the fray in May 2000 to prop up the UN mission and the Sierra Leone government by landing 1400 paratroopers and marine commandos in Freetown, securing the capital city and taking the rebel leader Foday Sankoh into captivity. UNAMSIL has been energised by the British support and with additional troops on the way. Yet, the UN is in a dilemma about further plans and policy, with the civil war unabated and the Rebel United Front (RUF) having reneged on the peace accord. The UN has little room for manoeuvre under the prevailing uncertainty and political chaos and has only two options:-

- (a) To tear up the Lome Peace accord and join the civil war.
- (b) To renegotiate the peace agreement with US help, which had brokered the earlier peace accord through Liberia.

Notwithstanding the UN's travails, concerns, and the rationale behind its initiative in Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL becomes an interesting case study in "second generation" peace-keeping operations by the UN. To understand and appreciate the UN's legality, capability and concepts to meet the challenges of peace-keeping in the new era, I shall cover the following aspects in the study :-

- (a) The chronology of the Sierra Leone conflict.
- (b) The legality of UN intervention.
- (c) The mandate and concepts of operations of UNAMSIL.
- (d) Command and control problems.

### **The Chronology of the Sierra Leone Conflict**

Sierra Leone is a West African state bordering the North Atlantic Ocean, and located between Guinea and Liberia. Formerly a British colony, it attained independence in 1961 and later adopted a Presidential form of government with vast powers vested in the President, who is the constitutional head as well as the Chief Executive. A large country seven times the size of Kosovo, it has a population of 5.2 million, 90 per cent of whom comprise 20 native African tribes; the remaining 10 per cent are Creoles, descendents

of freed Jamaican slaves who were settled in Freetown in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. 60 per cent of the people are Muslims, 30 per cent practice indigenous tribal beliefs and 10 per cent are Christians. Spoken languages are English, Mende, Terme and Arabic. The country is rich in minerals, with the economy primarily based on mining diamonds, gold and titanium.

The conflict in Sierra Leone dates back to March 1991 and coincides with the adoption of a new constitution. RUF rebels rejected the constitution and launched a civil war to overthrow the government. This civil war is aptly described as the 'diamond war,' since the rebels who control the diamond-rich Eastern province mine and sell diamonds to finance the insurgency. The Sierra Leone Government turned to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for assistance. ECOWAS put together a 'military observer group – the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) – with a Nigerian contingent to augment the Sierra Leone Army to defend Freetown, the capital, and the Western province. In 1992, the Sierra Leone Army itself overthrew the government and took over control of the country. Despite the change of power, the RUF continued the civil war.

UN intervention in Sierra Leone began with a diplomatic mission in 1995. The UN Secretary General appointed a special envoy, Mr Breehanu Dinko (Ethiopia), who worked in collaboration with the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and the ECOWAS, to negotiate for peace and to return the country to democratic civil rule. The UN succeeded in their diplomatic initiative, and parliamentary and presidential elections were held in February 1996. Mr Alhaji Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was elected President. The Army relinquished power to the elected President, but the RUF who did not participate in the elections continued the civil war. Mr Dinko continued with his efforts to negotiate another peace deal with the RUF. However, in November 1996, the Sierra Leone Army derailed the peace process by effecting a military coup, and formed a coalition made up of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the RUF under Major Johnny Paul Koroma who took over the government. President Kabbah and his government went into exile in neighbouring Guinea. The Secretary General stepped-

up UN involvement in Sierra Leone: sanctions were imposed in the form of an arms and oil embargo, and the ECOMOG was authorised to launch an offensive with Nigerian troops to restore President Kabbah and his government to power. In March 1998, the 'Junta' rule collapsed under the military offensive, and President Kabbah was returned to office. The Security Council terminated the oil and arms embargo and established the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) under the Chief of Mission Mr Okelo (Ghana) with the task of monitoring and advising the local government in restructuring the country's security forces.

UNOMSIL, however, proved ineffective. The civil war continued unabated and fighting ensued between the Nigerian troops of ECOMOG and the rebel forces. With heavy casualties inflicted on the Nigerian troops and mounting rebel pressure on Freetown, the US stepped-in with a diplomatic initiative through Liberia – a country with a strong lobby among American Senators. Reverend Jesse Jackson visited Liberia and prevailed on its President, Charles Taylor, to use his influence with the RUF leader Sankoh to enter into peace negotiations. On 7 July 1999, after much diplomatic effort, the Lome Peace Agreement was signed between the Sierra Leone Government and all other parties to the conflict, under the aegis of the UN and the US. The peace accord ended all hostilities, and the signatories entered into a power sharing agreement to form a government of national unity, wherein President Kabbah was accepted as head of the state with the rebel leader Sankoh as Vice President. RUF had representation in the government as well as a share in the control of diamond mines.

The Lome Peace Accord became the basis for the formulation of UNAMSIL, which was established on 22 October 1999 vide Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1270, authorising a military force of 6,000 personnel including 260 military observers, with the following mandate (UNOMSIL was simultaneously dissolved):-

- (a) To ensure implementation of the Lome peace accord, and to monitor the cease-fire.
- (b) To assist in the implementation of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration plans for Sierra Leone.

- (c) To support the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- (d) To provide support, as requested, to the elections to be held in accordance with Sierra Leone's constitution (Elections are due in mid-2001).

The UNAMSIL mandate was authorised under Chapter VI. But with the revision of the mandate vide SCR 1289 of 7 February 2000, the mission was empowered with peace-enforcement operations under Chapter VII, with the expansion of the mission to a strength of 11,100 along with an additional mandate:-

- (a) To provide security at key locations and government buildings, particularly in Freetown, including the Lungi airport.
- (b) To facilitate free flow of people, goods and humanitarian assistance along 'specified thoroughfares.'
- (c) To assist the Sierra Leone law enforcement authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities.

A unified command was created for the control of UNAMSIL operations, with Mr Oluyemi Adenji (Nigeria) as the Head of the Mission, and Maj Gen V K Jetley (India) as the Force Commander. This arrangement seemed appropriate, as Nigeria and India were the major contributors of troops with a brigade strength each (Nigeria has four battalions). The overall strength of the mission presently stands at 13 infantry battalions. Other contributors are Kenya, Ghana, Zambia, Bangladesh and Jordan.

On 19th May 2000, vide SCR 1299, UNAMSIL's strength has been expanded to 13,000 military personnel, keeping in mind the deteriorating situation with increased rebel attacks in greater numbers. In the expansion plan, Nigeria is to provide two additional battalions, while the UN is negotiating with other member states for contributions to reinforce UNAMSIL.

UNAMSIL's fire-power has been further augmented with a British 'Rapid Reaction Force', which has landed 800 paratroopers and 600 marine commandos from seven warships deployed along the Freetown harbour, ostensibly to protect and evacuate foreigners from the country. The British contingent under their own commander,

Brigadier David Richards, is operating outside the UNAMSIL command. The British have entered the region to provide support to President Kabbah and his government since they have a major stake in Sierra Leone, with British companies owning mining rights in the diamond industry.

Liberia is supporting the rebels, as it is the conduit for diamond exports to the outside world. The UN in fact attempted an embargo against the 'bloody diamond' export – a wager for the civil war – but the move was stalled by the US at the behest of Liberia. Thus the conflict in Sierra Leone is complicated with political interference and intrigue by outside powers, which makes UNAMSIL's mandate more hazardous while operating in a civil war scenario.

### **The Legality of UN Intervention**

In the New World Order, UN intervention on humanitarian grounds is gaining wider acceptance where there is large-scale human suffering and genocide in a protracted civil war scenario within a failed state. UN intervention in such cases is being justified by giving a broader definition to the aspect of 'threat to international peace and security,' where an internal conflict could create a fall-out disturbing the peace and tranquility of a region such as:-

- (a) Large-scale refugee migration.
- (b) Spillover of the conflict into a neighbouring state.
- (c) Humanitarian aid necessitated in a man-made disaster.
- (d) Denial of human rights and democratic freedom to the people.

The type and magnitude of UN intervention would depend on the geo-strategic importance of the area, the nature of the conflict and what would be considered 'manageable' by the UN.

UN intervention in Sierra Leone comes within the ambit of breach of peace in a region with possible spillover of the conflict into Guinea or Liberia. UN intervention in the area has followed a gradual escalation, starting with its diplomatic initiatives in 1995. The conditionality of 'consent and request' by all parties has also been adhered to while authorising UNAMSIL, which is mandated to

hold peace around the Lome Accord. But in wider terms, UN intervention is aimed at reinstating President Kabbah's government. The restoration of democracy is a noble cause, but is the UN capable of perceiving the will of the people? President Kabbah has proved to be an inept ruler who has long lost the support of his people through mis-governance, cronyism and corruption. The UN, in the name of restoring democracy, may be foisting a ruler against the will of the people; and may end up only promoting the commercial interests of Nigerians and the British who have stakes in the incumbent government.

In Sierra Leone, it is not so much a question of the legality of UN intervention in an intra-state conflict, but the degree of UN involvement and the motives behind the escalation of its commitment in this area. A mega peacekeeping operation with such large investments in men, material and mandate is inexplicable. The peace dividend that might accrue with the UNAMSIL operations will not be commensurate with expense in capital and human lives. In the selection of high priority UN missions to be deployed in regions on the basis of humanitarian aid or for eliminating threats to international peace and security, there are other areas that merit greater attention and investment than Sierra Leone. The tragedies of human sufferings in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Afghanistan have surpassed all man-made disasters. Yet, the UN has maintained only minimal presence in these areas. UN initiatives on the principles of restoration of democracy would have greater legitimacy in Afghanistan, or even Pakistan, where governments have been overthrown by warring tribes or by military coups. There is no denying the fact that the Afghan imbroglio is a greater threat to international peace and security, with greater geo-political importance compared to Sierra Leone. Yet, the UN has never attempted a serious peace initiative in Afghanistan, which was warranted at a stage when Dr Rabbani's government was overthrown by the Taliban. Dr Rabbani's government was recognised by the UN and had sought UN intervention. Yet, the UN, at the behest of the US, abdicated its responsibility towards the Afghan people to Pakistan. Such contradictions and subjectivity in the UN's approach raise doubts about the legality and motives of UNAMSIL operations in Sierra Leone.



## The Mandate and Concept of Operations

The expansive mandate for the UNAMSIL reads similar to the tasks assigned to UN peacekeeping in Somalia. Woven around the Lome Peace accord, the mandate has three major operational components.

The first operational responsibility of the peacekeepers is to assist the Sierra Leone government in consolidating their hold in Freetown and to enable the law enforcement authorities to execute their responsibilities. This task has been primarily assigned to the Nigerian brigade, who have been fighting over a number of years to deny the capture of Freetown by the rebel forces. Over the years, the Nigerians have lost nearly 700 soldiers and have been involved in serious fighting. Now with the arrival of the British Rapid Reaction Force, who pack a better punch, the role of clearing Freetown off rebels as also securing neighbouring areas has been taken over by the British. The RUF has been thrown back beyond Masiaka, 60 Km East of the capital, ever since chapter VII was authorised to clear pockets of resistance.

The second major task is to disarm and demobilise the rebel forces, for which the UN troops are deployed in key locations in the countryside all along the Eastern province, which is the stronghold of RUF rebels concentrated at Kailahun. Indian troops are primarily deployed in these areas with headquarters at Daru. Since disarmament of rebels is on a voluntary basis, this task is mandated under Chapter VI, wherein UN peacekeeping (UNPK) forces would negotiate with the warring factions to surrender their arms and ammunition, and to enable the flow of men, material and supplies along nominated routes. Force is to be used only in self-defence. The fulfillment of such tasks under Chapter VI are bound to fail. No rebels are known to surrender arms voluntarily, and these tactics are known to have failed miserably in earlier missions in Bosnia and Somalia. In Sierra Leone too, voluntary demobilisation has been a token gesture. Moreover, such tasks necessitate isolated company picket deployments at 'key' collection centres, rendering UN troops vulnerable to being taken hostage or in danger of being cut-off. Chapter VI mode of 'pacific' tactics have only made the UN

forces vulnerable to rebel attack, more so since they are lightly armed and heavily outnumbered. The RUF rebels swarming the Eastern province number around 45,000, while UN soldiers number no more than 5000 located at key locations spread over large areas.

UNAMSIL is indeed involved in a 'second generation' peace keeping operation, wherein traditional peacekeeping concepts of 'use of minimum force' by lightly armed troops will not suffice. When UNPK forces are inducted in a civil war scenario, troops must be deployed in strength and well armed, as at any stage they could get involved in heavy fighting. They need to be empowered under Chapter VII from the period of initial induction, with tactics of 'coercion' or 'show of force' left to local commanders. Contingents need to have their own deterrents in terms of tanks and armed helicopters, which proved so effective in the Indian operations in Somalia. There is no doubt that peacekeeping involves pacific application of force. But such 'force' at the disposal of the contingent commander needs to be a credible deterrent, to enable the peacekeeping force to negotiate, to coerce, and to implement a peace accord from a position of strength; weakness in numbers needs to be compensated by additional fire-power.

The third phase of the operation would be to expand the Government's hold over the Eastern province. This phase of the operation is hard to conceive in a foreseeable time frame, and UNAMSIL's operations are likely to go on for a long period. This phase will require additional troops. Presently it is accepted that the Sierra Leone Government will undertake this operation with their own forces and by raising local militias. UN troops will be in a supportive role, along with the British troops, who will train and equip the Sierra Leone forces for this phase of operations.

### **The Command and Control Problems**

The UN strategy is to empower a regional organisation or a regional power to undertake responsibility for conflict management on behalf of the UN. This concept has its merits. A regional state would understand the dynamics of the conflict, and the ethnic and

tribal cultural diversities better than an outside power. In the Sierra Leone conflict, for a good many years ECOWAS, with the support of Nigerian troops, has been involved in conflict management. Though the Nigerians have suffered major casualties in the civil war, they have continued to stay on with a large contingent in the UNAMSIL. They have a stake in the area, having allied themselves with President Kabbah's government.

The reliance on a 'Regional Cop' to intervene in a conflict with UN authorisation is prudent in theory but not so much in practice. It creates its own dynamics by steering a conflict with regional biases and hidden motives. The situation gets compounded when other states also contribute troops under the UN banner. The UNAMSIL has a unified structure, with the Head of the Mission and the Force Commander being drawn from member states who have provided the largest contingents, in this case Nigeria and India, respectively.

There should be a common strategy and uniform policy for the execution of tasks. However, Nigeria has been a major actor on the scene with its involvement in the conflict for a number of years. It is only natural that their regional interests would affect Nigerian troops and the Head of Mission, which may not necessarily coincide with the UN's professed impartial handling of the conflict. Cracks are evident in the command and control structure of UNAMSIL, where the Head of Mission has differed on issues of employment of troops, with General Jetley's concept of conducting operations.

The endeavour of the Nigerians has been to operate outside the command of UNAMSIL, particularly as the Nigerian contingent is likely to be enhanced with more infantry battalions. The deployment of the British Rapid Reaction Forces in Freetown has compounded the command problems as they in any case have their own command set-up outside the UNAMSIL structure. The UNAMSIL strength and mandate is being enhanced and for this multi-dimensional mission to be effective, its command and control structure demands greater integration with greater deliberation and without any ego biases with all contingents accepting orders from the authorised unified command.

## Conclusion

India has been a major contributor to UNPK missions. We have always demonstrated our keen commitment and obligation to the world body, which has enhanced our standing and status internationally. We have never shied off from any hazardous task, where we were convinced that the UN peacekeeping initiative was in good faith, providing humanitarian aid and for maintaining peace in the region. India is a major participant in UNAMSIL, having contributed a contingent of three infantry battalions, including a mechanised battalion. India has also been bestowed the honour of providing the Force Commander of the largest UN mission. This only indicates the confidence, faith and recognition of the professionalism of our officers and the dedication of our troops by the world body. This is indeed laudable, and India's continued contribution in UN peace missions, with zeal and sanguinity, will indeed enhance the image of our nation and our Armed Forces. This also affords a unique operational opportunity to our troops to operate in an international environment along with contingents from other countries.

Having said all that, I also feel that our government and the Ministry of Defence need to be more circumspect when volunteering troops for a UNPK force that will be operating in a civil war scenario. Where peacekeeping will invariably turn into peace enforcement, the UNPK force will end up joining the civil war on the side of one party or the other. In such a situation Indian troops will die to keep someone else's peace. What is worse, they may be fighting for the wrong side, for the wrong reasons and with wrong methods. We have had our harsh experience of the IPKF in Sri Lanka, where Indian troops suffered heavy casualties and humiliation when they got sucked into a wrong war with political miscalculations and with incorrect assessment of the dynamics of the conflict.

This is the danger in Sierra Leone where the UN has raised the mandate and the force levels. This will indeed perpetuate the presence of UNAMSIL, as also its direct involvement in the conflict. The Sierra Leone situation has already become messy with so many outside powers exerting pressure, directly or indirectly, to

ensure an outcome that will be in the interests of the Western powers rather than the people of Sierra Leone. The UN might end up foisting a despot on its people, as happened in Congo in the 1960s – where in the aftermath of the UN operations, Colonel Seke Mobutu emerged as the strong man and who misruled Congo for the next two decades. As a result Congo – now Zaire – is seeking UN help once again for providing it political and economic stability after decades of misgovernance and economic devastation when faced with internal conflict and external threat from its neighbours.

From all the case studies, especially of the post Cold-War era, some major lessons have come out in UNPK initiatives that merit serious attention. UN intervention in intra-state conflicts has become an accepted international norm on humanitarian grounds though in contravention of Article 2 of the UN Charter. However, such UN initiatives must be deliberated on with its related legal and operational repercussions, and decisions for undertaking UNPK missions must have wider global consensus. The Security Council, which is more powerful than the General Assembly, is the decision making body for all UN peacekeeping initiatives. And the Security Council means the P5, but in reality the US, which drives the Security Council as per its perceptions and its strategic interests.

The UN needs reforms, restructuring and revival to enhance its credibility and to become more representative for wider sharing of the decision making process. The Security Council needs enlargement with Third World representation so that peace initiatives have inputs from all regions. Till that happens, major peace keeping initiatives like UNAMSIL should be discussed in the General Assembly and authorised by a "Uniting for Peace" resolution.

In the present environment, where the UN is virtually a tool in the hands of the US, UN policy would only draw criticism for subjectivity in its selective intervention. As it is, the regional concept of strategy is looked upon as another form of apartheid, with a feeling that 'a white man will not die for a black man's cause'. In the post-Somalia period, UN policy is to separate areas of responsibility for the East and West – Western troops would be

deployed for UNPK missions in the European theatre, whereas responsibility for Africa and Asian continents would be the domain of Third World countries. As for the US, there is a dichotomy in its policy for participation in UN missions. It is prepared to act as the 'Super Cop' but without getting its troops involved in a fight. With their bitter experience in Somalia, they are a reluctant superpower and would not commit their troops in combat under the UN, but prefer controlling the UN's actions from outside.

UNAMSIL cannot succeed in its mandate without the support of the US, which alone can provide the logistics and fire-support for a major peace initiative. And in Sierra Leone, if the US sides with Liberia which is supporting the RUF, the UNAMSIL is indeed imperilled with political intrigue and power play affecting its outcome. The US is interested in seeing it through, because its failure will cast a shadow on the impending peace keeping initiative in Zaire; the restoration of the people's will may not necessarily be the imminent objective. UNAMSIL is on the brink of failure with diverging interests of the major players in the region. This will only push the UN initiative into an open-ended quagmire and leave the United Nations in a 'no-win' situation.

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# Child Warriors of Sierra Leone

LT COL SUDHAKAR JEE

## Introduction

Over the last decade, more than two million children have been killed, one million orphaned, six million seriously injured or permanently disabled and 10 million left with grave psychological trauma after facing conflict situations around the world.

Sierra Leone is a small country located on the West coast of the African Continent. It is circular in shape extending from North to South a maximum distance of 332 km and from East to West a distance of about 328 km. It is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean, Guinea and Liberia, on the West and South West, North and North East and East and South East, respectively.

Having been tormented by a civil war prior to 1997, children as young as eight years are engaged in the conflict in Sierra Leone. Often the same war which orphans children sucks them into its terrifying vortex of violence, turning the brutalised into the brutaliser. Nearly 50 per cent of the total fighting forces belong to this category in Sierra Leone. The social support system having been disrupted, the children of Sierra Leone have been thrown into the lap of violence and mayhem.

## Scope

The article covers the following :-

- (a) Factors contributing towards the Civil War.
- (b) The Civil War.
- (c) The Child Warriors.
- (d) Evaluation and Recommendations.

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Lt Col Sudhakar Jee was deputed to the United Nations as a Military Observer in Sierra Leone. He is at present posted in Army Headquarters.

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## FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TOWARDS THE CIVIL WAR

### Geography

The porous border with Liberia, a hostile neighbour in the South and South East, lends itself to sustained rebel activities.

### Political

**Political Background.** Sierra Leone became independent of British rule in 1961. Sierra Leoneans inherited a strong economy with a strong local currency, disciplined armed forces, functional and efficient administrative infrastructure considering the requirements of the population at the time of independence. The strengths and weaknesses of the system, however, were a consequence of the traditional African Chieftdom system, loyalty to extended families and tribes coupled with wide disparities between the ruling classes and the masses. Post independence, Sierra Leone witnessed the decline of institutions – judiciary, armed forces and administration – under the long rule of late President Siaka Stevens, whose machinations in connivance with the rather unscrupulous Lebanese business community led to the collapse of most institutions.

**Administrative Division.** The country is divided into three Provinces, viz, Northern, Southern, and Eastern Provinces, with the provincial capitals being Makeni, Bo and Kenema, respectively. In addition, there is an administrative area which includes Freetown. Provinces are divided into administrative districts. Each district consists of several chieftdoms.

**Corruption and Poor Governance.** Corruption at high places has denied the fruits of democracy to the populace at the grass root level. Poor governance has further compounded the political problem leading to the civil war.

### Economy

**Per capita Income.** Sierra Leone is rated as the second poorest country in the world after Niger. Annual income is USD 160 per year which is \$13 a month per capita.



**Industry.** The majority of the population outside the Freetown Peninsula practices subsistence farming. Sierra Leone is the world's second largest producer of Rutile, a strategic raw material used for aircraft paint. Ironically, Sierra Leone is also an important producer of diamonds, with many Alluvial and Kimberlite mines located in the eastern mountainous region. However, smuggling is extensive and government control minimal. Consequently, this area has also been a recurring source of conflict and criminal activity. The diamond mining area is presently under the control of the rebels.

**Lack of Infrastructure.** The civil war has led to the neglect of infrastructural development. The road and railway networks which had been built by Indians are in a state of disuse due to lack of maintenance. The airfields, air transportation being the life line, are currently in a state of disuse except for the international airport at Lungi and a small air field at Hastings.

### **Socio-Cultural**

**Ethnic Groups.** There are about 17 ethnic groups in the country based on three types of languages, viz Mende, Mel and others. Ethnic rivalry is a common phenomenon.

**Religion.** There are two major religions. About 70 per cent of the population are Muslims and 30 per cent Christians.

**Life Expectancy and Displaced Population.** Life expectancy is 43 years. Out of an approximate population of 4.2 million, more than 10,000 people have been killed during the rebel war since 1991. Approximately 4,30,000 people are classed as refugees or IDPs (Internally Displaced Persons). There are 2,60,000 refugees in Guinea, 1,60,000 in Liberia, and 10,000 in other countries.

**Poverty and Failure of Education System.** The country having been ravaged by the civil war, with mounting poverty and failure in education system, its children have been lured by the avenue offered by fighting forces.

**Disrupted Social Support.** The mayhem perpetrated by the

Revolutionary United Front (RUF) has disrupted the social support system. With scattered families, children have fallen prey to the on-going violence. While many have been abducted by the RUF and coerced into joining the Civil War, others have joined the Civil Defence Force (CDF) called the Kamajors and Sierra Leone Army (SLA) voluntarily to avenge the death of their near and dear ones and protect their homeland. For a better understanding of child warriors, it is essential to delve into the dynamics of the Civil War unleashed in Sierra Leone by centrifugal forces.

## THE CIVIL WAR

### Events Prior to May 1997

**Emergence of "People's Army".** The civil war in Sierra Leone began on 23 March 1991. The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) sought to mobilise a socially excluded youth underclass to form a "People's Army" to overthrow the All Party Congress regime of President Joseph Momoh. The RUF/SL drew inspiration from the populist youth politics advocated in the Libyan "Green Book". The leader of the RUF/SL, a cashiered army corporal, is Foday Saybana Sankoh, trained as a guerrilla in Benghazi.

**Abduction of Children by RUF/SL.** The RUF/SL abducted and trained a large number of captured border-zone youths. Some came from the most isolated and run-down schools in the country. Others were young 'tributors' working in Alluvial diamond mining pits for Lebanese and Sierra Leonean merchant 'supporters'. Abductees co-operated with the movement to save their lives, but some found the movement's analysis of the breakdown of Sierra Leonean society meaningful and accepted guerrilla training willingly.

**Sierra Leone Military Force.** Opposed to the RUF/SL was an ill-equipped government army, the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF). Inexperienced war-front junior officers quickly learnt to survive by copying RUF/SL guerrilla tactics, including the recruitment and training of under-age irregulars. Much of the fighting was done by these locally recruited irregulars, most of whom took fear-inhibiting drugs.

**Pay Revolt.** In April 1992 a pay revolt by some war-front junior officers escalated into a full-blown coup against the Momoh presidency from within the RSLMF. The young coup-makers formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Believing it had radicalised the coup-makers at the war front, the RUF/SL expected to be invited to share in some kind of government of national unity.

**Quantitative Enhancement of RSLMF.** The civilian political elements, especially in the capital city, rallied to the personable young chairman of the NPRC, Captain Valentine Strasser, a Krio, persuading him against any negotiation with the discredited RUF/SL. The Army was rearmed and transformed. From a fighting force of about 2,500 when the war began, the RSLMF was increased under the NPRC to a total of about 15,000 hastily trained recruits. Many of the new intake were from the socially disadvantaged 'underclass' courted by the RUF/SL.

**Loss of Control of the Army.** The NPRC quickly lost control of its enlarged but poorly trained Army. Jealousy between units was rife. The pay was abysmal and sometimes never reached war-front units. Soldiers and NPRC officials engaged in the mining of Alluvial diamonds — the country's main resource — in the war zone. Military officers would declare zones off-limits and drive civilians out while undertaking 'sweeps' against the RUF/SL but in reality digging for diamonds. Some rogue officers apparently conspired to buy diamonds from RUF/SL groups in return for weapons. Other units faked rebel attacks to drive civilians off in order to loot.

**Children in Civil Defence Force.** Having little faith in the bloated, corrupt NPRC-enlarged army, citizen civil defence groups comprising of adults and children began to mobilise to protect rural areas against RUF/SL pockets and army renegades alike. Beginning as early as 1992, these civil defence groups drew upon the practical and esoteric knowledge of traditional hunters.

**Introduction of School Children by RUF/SL.** The RUF/SL then began a new expansive campaign in late 1994, developing forward bases and launching hit-and-run raids on parts of the country, aiming to cause economic devastation (especially to the mining

economy), to advertise its political agenda and to abduct new recruits. One such raid (on Kambia, in north-western Sierra Leone) netted about 100 school children—boys and girls many subsequently inducted into the movement.

**Cease Fire in January 1996.** Resolution of the hostage crisis brought the RUF/SL wider publicity and initiated the building of a peace process, leading to a provisional ceasefire in January 1996. The NPRC regime, bankrupt of support in the country, and under considerable international pressure, split over the peace process. Strasser was replaced by Captain Julius Maada Bio in a coup, and Bio was steered by public protest, apparently reluctantly, towards elections. The parliamentary election was won by an alliance led by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP). The presidential contest was won by the SLPP candidate Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah, a former UN bureaucrat. Kabbah continued the peace process initiated by Bio and Sankoh.

**Army Sidelined and Kamajors Enlarged.** The new democratic government was suspicious of the Army and sidelined it during protracted peace negotiations, concentrating efforts on building up Kamajor militia activities. A major recruitment and training drive took place. There may have been as many as 15,000 to 25,000 Kamajor fighters comprising of more than 30 per cent children by the end of 1996. Kamajor militia units never observed any ceasefire, and key RUF/SL bases, including Sankoh's Gola Forest Headquarters, were overrun during negotiations. Sankoh and Kabbah signed the peace agreement on 30 November 1996.

**Demobilisation of Underage Combatants.** Under-age combatants from the government side began demobilisation in 1993-94, but demobilisation of the RUF/SL and the Kamajor militia was still pending when the peace agreement was signed. Surviving RUF/SL units went underground in the forest. Kamajor militia operations continued.

**Emergence of New Military Alliance.** The RUF/SL and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) came together in an alliance to form a new military regime in Freetown. The Kamajor militia

changed places with the RUF/SL in the diamond-rich forested margins of the country, pledging to fight to restore the Kabbah government. The AFRC regime survived until February 1998, when the Nigerian-led West African intervention force, ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), took over the Freetown peninsula and the major provincial centres. RUF/SL diehards returned to the forests of the Liberian border, vowing to fight on.

### **Event from May 1997 to July 2000**

**The Junta Regime (May 1997 to February 1998).** Within weeks of having taken control, the military junta was joined in Freetown by the RUF to form the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). While Kabbah's elected government fled to exile in neighbouring Guinea, the junta named various officers and rebels to ministerial positions and tried to conduct normal state affairs. However, the UN Security Council imposed an embargo on arms and fuel and restricted the travel of the members of the junta. At the same time, ECOMOG enforced separate Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sanctions to the point where barely any food, fuel or humanitarian assistance was allowed into Sierra Leone for much of 1997. Under intense economic and political pressure, negotiations between ECOMOG and the AFRC were concluded and the junta agreed to give up power to ECOMOG within six months from 22 October 1997. This plan, known as the Conakry Agreement, was vaguely worded but did call for disarmament and demobilisation of all combatants, as well as the release of Foday Sankoh from detention in Nigeria.

**February 1998 to July 2000.** Negotiations between the AFRC and ECOMOG to establish modalities in the Conakry Agreement continued into 1998. However, in early February 1998, ECOMOG forces decisively engaged with the junta and had begun to rout the remaining AFRC forces across the countryside to the East. ECOMOG was reinforced during January/February 1999. With the Lome Peace Accord signed on 07 July 1999, an 11,000-strong multinational UN Peacekeeping Force is in Sierra Leone to bring peace to this war ravaged nation.

## THE CHILD WARRIORS

### Environment Obtaining

**Children Associated with Fighting Forces (CAFF).** The war began in 1991 with no more than a handful of insurgents pitched against small government forces. The estimates of the total number of combatants in Sierra Leone, including the Kamajor militia, range from 50,000 to 75,000—a fifteen fold increase. In the civil wars of the last ten years, combatants have become increasingly youthful. Some forces are made up largely of young teenagers. Girl fighters are increasingly common. It is estimated that about 50 per cent of all combatants in the RUF/SL are in the age range of 8 to 14 years. There were also significant numbers of under-18 combatants in army irregular units and the Kamajor militia. Both RSLMF and RUF/SL had deployed under-age female combatants.

**Livelihood.** Half or more of the population of this tiny nation are under the age of 18 years. Militia life offers training and a livelihood in a country where poverty and numbers overwhelm education and jobs. But the trend towards more youthful combatants also reflects that children – their social support disrupted by war – make brave and loyal fighters. The company of comrades-in-arms becomes a substitute for family.

**Education Drop-outs.** Time and again the CAFF return to the theme of educational aspirations. Economic failure, political corruption and structural adjustment wreaked havoc on the educational system in Sierra Leone. Formal education has not been effective in preparing young people for the economic realities of modern life, and both RSLMF and RUF/SL recruited extensively from the swollen ranks of education drop-outs hustling for a living in logging and mining camps. Yet the loss of educational opportunity is seen as a major factor in the decision to fight.

**Failure of Demobilisation.** The accounts repeatedly stress that it makes little sense to stand down voluntarily without any real promise of social reintegration, education or training, or civilian job prospects. The failure to address this complex issue caused, and now prolongs, the conflict. Frustrated by the failure of demobilisation to offer a way out, several child warriors promptly re-enlisted after the military coup of 25 May 1997.

**Patrimonial Politics.** The single most remarkable commentary is from an articulate Kamajor militia fighter. Blaming the RUF/SL for the loss of his home and educational prospects, he nevertheless unerringly puts his finger on the failures of patrimonial politics as the cause of the anger of the young cadres of the RUF/SL. He concludes that they, like him, are frustrated students. Patrimonial politics sent a few to study to the highest level overseas and denied that opportunity to a majority, not on merit but on grounds of political favouritism.

**Light Weapons and Battle Kit.** Technology also has facilitated the rise in the number of child combatants. Battle kit was once heavy and very expensive for children to handle. Automatic rifles are now light enough for a 10-year old. Cheap but efficient rifles flood the country. An AK 47, firing thirty bullets per trigger pull, costs the equivalent of the price of a goat.

### **Characteristics**

**Aim of Fighting.** The capacity of the young combatants opposed to the RUF/SL to understand what their enemies are fighting for stood in stark contrast to the incomprehension of observers, to whom the AFRC/RUF alliance between military enemies after the May coup came as a complete surprise. Those who pose a stark contrast between the merits of democracy and the evils of militarism in Sierra Leone would do well to heed the experience and opinions of these politically informed fighters not yet old enough to vote.

**Interpretation of Conflict.** Political understanding of the war is a striking feature of some of the comments. CAFF reject the idea that the conflict is barbarously purposeless or is the result of ethnic and religious tensions, and prefer to interpret it primarily in terms of an intergenerational struggle for a fairer society.

**Own Rules of War.** Confusing war and play, child combatants are heedless of danger. Groups of youngsters in bush wars operate on their own initiative for long periods in remote terrain, sometimes without even a radio to convey commands. Incompletely socialised, they make up rules of war as they go. Civilians bear the brunt of unpredictable atrocities.

**Adult Reaction.** There are two main adult reactions. The first is to stigmatise youth combatants as evil. Many under-age recruits are from remote rural regions. Poorly educated, they are readily despised by urbanised elites. Elites always fear 'unwashed' youth. Sierra Leone is no exception. Sometimes, as in Liberia, colonially rooted attitudes to interior peoples reinforce the stigmatisation of young rural combatants as 'barbarians'. The other reaction is to see young fighters as victims and tools of undemocratic military regimes or brutally unscrupulous 'warlords'.

**Conviction.** Many under-age combatants choose to fight with their eyes open, and defend their choice, sometimes proudly. Set against a background of destroyed families and failed educational systems, militia activity offers young people a chance to make their way in the world as victims of war.

**Dexterous Military Skills.** Male and female under-age irregulars are rated highly by their officers. Under-age irregulars fight without inhibitions and kill without compunction, sometimes causally, sometimes as an extension of play. They are good in ambush situations, one of the main combat tactics, and – separated by war from their kin – are fiercely loyal to the officer responsible for recruiting and training them.

**Sustenance.** Smoking marijuana, being prepared for battle with injections of amphetamines, taking crack cocaine or a cocktail of local substances including gunpowder is an accepted norm. Atrocities are undoubtedly committed under the influence of drugs. Girl combatants regularly experience military rape sometimes as a 'punishment' for losing ground. Large numbers of children have been conscripted against their will, mainly by the RUF/SL. In all these respects, a majority of participants in the Sierra Leone war can be considered victims of military manipulation. But many under-age combatants joined up voluntarily, some looking for revenge, others to survive. Joining a militia group is both a meal ticket and a substitute for education. The pay may be derisory, but weapon training pays quicker dividends than school ever did; soon the AK 47 brings food, money, a warm bath and instant adult respect. The combat group substitutes for lost family and friends.



## Induction

The bulk of the CAFF with RUF are abducted school and street children, while a majority of the CAFF in Civil Defence Force and Sierra Leone Army are volunteers.

## Initiation

CAFF in the rebel outfits undergo a brutal initiation ceremony, wherein a red hot iron rod with a sharp end is pierced into the chest to etch "RUF". This is followed by various other inhuman and cruel initiation procedures.

## Employment

After initiation, children are grouped as per their age, physical fitness, bravery and intellect. Some children are enrolled as 'Vigilante' to collect intelligence and act as early warning elements and some as 'fighters', 'load carriers' and 'couriers'. Vigilantes with their growing military acumen are upgraded to 'Fighters' and issued with weapons after intense physical and weapon training. Some of the child soldiers of RUF, besides performing the tasks of intelligence collection, act as 'salvagers' to loot the anti-rebel villages on completion of a successful raid. The child soldiers in the 'Civil Defence Force' undertake offensive as well as defensive tasks along with the adult members of the team.

## EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Evaluation

**Vulnerability of Children.** As there is no practice of keeping accurate birth records, it is difficult to ascertain the age of a child combatant. In civil war situations, children are particularly sought after as soldiers since they are the cheapest, easily brainwashed and ultimately the most expendable. The girl child is especially vulnerable as she also faces the additional threat of sexual abuse.

**Proliferation of Light Weapons.** This has made it all the more

easier for children to use them. In addition to the physical dangers, the child also faces psychological scarring.

**Rehabilitation.** Introduced into the innocent mind are categorisations of separations on religious, ethnic and racial lines. In this context, the question of rehabilitation of children traumatised by war needs to be taken more seriously and expeditiously.

**Value Attached to Children.** Other than these CAFF who are being used as cannon fodder in order to preserve the adult cadre, the ones not in combat situation face daily battle against nutritional, educational and other deprivations. The fact that children's rights seem to get less priority than other human rights issues even at international forums is testimony to the lack of value attached to children.

### **Recommendations**

**Census.** Census of population in Sierra Leone needs to be carried out with following aims :-

- (a) Upgrading the record of indigenous population.
- (b) Ascertaining the date of birth of children.
- (c) Issue of identity cards along the Eastern and Southern borders of Sierra Leone.
- (d) Facilitate Control Measures to isolate rebels.

**International Protocol.** Provisions of International protocol banning the use of children in war be made strong enough to prevent the ugly trend.

**Combating Exploitation of Children.** The UN protocol must be combined with the governing statute of the new International Criminal Court, which defines the use of children under 15 in conflict as a war crime, to combat such exploitation effectively.

**UNAMSIL Mandate.** Mandate for the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) be revised to include extension of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Re-integration (DDR) of CAFF.

**Synergisation.** Integrate employment of International Humanitarian Agencies for Synergy.

**Registration.** NGOs be mobilised to reach out to remote parts of Sierra Leone, identify CAFF and facilitate their registration under the aegis of UN humanitarian agencies.

**Reintegration.** CAFF on registration be camped suitably with proper security and gradually be reintegrated with their families and society. Adoption of orphans should be promoted.

**Reconstruction.** Reconstruction of school buildings and reviving their functioning should be taken up in earnest as top of the agenda by the National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (NCRRR).

**Sensitisation.** Public be sensitised by multidimensional means to accept CAFF's reintegration.

**Resettlement.** Food, clothing and housing be arranged on semi-permanent basis in camps till the CAFF get reintegrated.

**Rehabilitation.** Pragmatic rehabilitation programme be evolved to include education, vocational training and options to join Security Forces, and implemented.

**Vulnerable Segment.** Vulnerable segment of the population be identified and kept under watch to prevent being exploited by the rebels.

## Conclusion

The future of a nation always lies in its children. The children of Sierra Leone associated with fighting forces deserve the paramount focus of the International Humanitarian Agencies and the Government of Sierra Leone.

Today's CAFF are tomorrow's youth of Sierra Leone. If their unchecked influx into fighting forces is not nipped in the bud, devastated Sierra Leone may have to wait much longer for a return of peace. The various agencies including the International Peace Keeping Force presently operating in Sierra Leone would do well

to synergise their efforts so as to address this issue effectively. This may contribute towards restoration of normalcy and bring lasting peace to this war torn country.

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# The Likely Developments in West Asia and North Africa in Early 21st Century

AMBASSADOR GEHAD MADI

## Introduction

The dominant issue in West Asia and North Africa is the Arab-Israeli conflict and the peace process. I would however like to discuss this issue not as a single moment in history but rather as one that is active and dynamic, among many others that are currently in motion, in and around the Middle East. In other words, it is the broader picture of the future of the Middle East at large. The Middle East is not simply the Arab-Israeli conflict and the process of peace. But it is also North Africa, Iraq, Sudan and other issues. Its future will not be shaped only by the relations amongst its parties but also by its relations as a region with other players in the surrounding area and beyond and by the place it will occupy in the emerging global trend.

Much is being said about the birth of the new millennium, its challenges, opportunities and requirements. It has been labelled as the dawning of a different era with new rules and new approaches. Indeed, the advent of the Twenty-First Century should not be viewed as a simple turning of a page in our calendars. It should rather usher in a new age, marking deep transformations in many fields from one set of concepts, and from one *modus operandi*, to another. The world is currently in the process of elaborating a new agenda that includes issues such as co-operative security and preventive diplomacy, creating a universal market, globalisation and the free flow of information.

The Middle East cannot afford to be detached or isolated from this process. The region is witnessing a number of important and far-reaching dynamics that are simultaneously at play. They range from the socio-economic to the strategic-political. They permeate

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both the regional as well as the global landscapes. The Middle East is at a crossroads and winds of change are blowing from within and around it.

How will the Middle East emerge from all this? What shape will it take or should it take in the coming twenty to twenty five years? An obvious answer to this question is that the region should be peaceful, secure, stable and positively integrated amongst its parties and with the world community. But how should this be translated into practical guidelines and principles that can ensure its fulfillment? What are the bases upon which we must tackle the different dynamics, so as to lay the foundation of a new Middle East?

### **The Arab-Israeli Conflict**

I will attempt to deal with what I see as the most important factors in this regard. The resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict is the most important issue that will affect peace and security in the region. We have now reached the eleventh hour, the moment of truth, what will hopefully be the last chapter of this conflict? If it is not concluded comprehensively and justly, it will continue to haunt us in the future and the Arab-Israeli file will remain a major source of tension.

As we look at the prospects for the "Peace Process" at this stage, we see two elements that are distinct, yet generically interrelated — "Peace" and the "Process of Peace." "Peace" is a state of being, "the process" is a mechanism by which the region can reach that "state". Hence, as we approach what we hope is the final chapter of the Arab-Israeli conflict, we must ask ourselves: how can we ensure that "the process" will truly lead to a state of "peace" in the Middle East? And, will a successful conclusion to the "process", which leads to "peace", be our last stop or is it just a step, significant as it may be, which must be followed by others that build upon it and raise it to higher levels of "regional normalcy?" Moreover, is the "process" the only venue to "peace and stability" in the Middle East as a whole or are there other areas that need to be addressed and catered for? In short, we must look into the future and ask ourselves "what next"; what are the requirements and prospects of peace through *and* beyond the "process".

The mechanism, "the process", has been in place since the Madrid Conference in 1991. Its *terms of reference* are Security Council Resolutions 242 and 338, the principle of land for peace, addressing the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and ensuring the right of all states, including Israel, to live within secure and recognised boundaries. Moreover, "the process" also has a "*code of conduct*", *modus operandi* among its parties. This "code" stems from the historical recognition that Arabs and Israelis are destined to live together in one region and that the path to their security can only be achieved through just and fair peace agreements and not through force or the acquisition of territory. *Hence, they must act in a spirit of partnership, mutual respect, confidence, common interests and the conviction that the "process" must not be a zero-sum game.*

Since Madrid, the "process" has had its ups and downs. It achieved successes and met with some failures. If we examine carefully the reasons behind the successes and the failures, we will come to realise that progress was achieved when the terms of reference were upheld and the "code of conduct" respected, while stagnation occurred when they were violated and abused.

The Oslo Agreements were a success. So was the Jordanian-Israeli Peace Treaty at Wadi Araba. Reaching the "Rabin Deposit" on the Syrian Track and the negotiations that proceeded in its framework was an important step ahead, though not conclusive. The failures were in the numerous months that passed us by without taking one step ahead or moving forward on any of the negotiating tracks. They were characterised by procrastination in implementation, non-compliance with agreements, breakdown of confidence and trust and the violation of the principle of land for peace with fervent Israeli settlement activities.

The failures were the result of shortsighted political aims, while the successes were the result of long-term visions and courage. In this lies the key to ensuring that the current process will truly lead to peace in the region: in upholding its terms of reference and abiding by its *modus operandi* in the recognition that this is a process of partners not of protagonists and that only fair deals and

strong partners can conclude agreements. The current stage requires strict adherence to cardinal principles and first among them is land for peace.

This is the essence of Resolutions 242 and 338. It translates into the formula of withdrawal from the Arab occupied territories in exchange for recognition of Israel and the right of all parties, without exception, including Israel to live within secure and inviolable borders. The conclusive fulfillment of the first part of the formula is the surest way to attain its second part. In other words full reconciliation and normalcy require full withdrawal. Hence, the withdrawal from the West Bank, Gaza and the Syrian Golan Heights is unavoidable if we want to attain peace.

Another cardinal principle is the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination, including the right to statehood. This right *should not be negotiable; it is inherent and unquestionable*. What remains therefore is the nature of this state. It must be set out clearly and in no uncertain terms that the key lies in *viability*. A fragmented, unsustainable state is untenable. A viable and endurable Palestinian state is a *sine-qua non* to stability and security in the historical land of Palestine and in the region at large.

Moreover, a just and comprehensive resolution to all the issues of the Permanent Status Talks is unavoidable. We cannot postpone any of them; for this means *postponing peace itself*. This applies to the issue of Jerusalem, the issue of refugees, the issue of settlements and the issue of borders. These principles are the only means by which we can reach comprehensive and lasting peace. We must proceed in this direction with vigour and determination. And along the way we must take all possible steps that rebuild confidence and avoid those that poison the atmosphere and fuel distrust.

Promises are no longer sufficient. They must be coupled with positive deeds. In this vein, settlement activities in the West Bank, Gaza and the Syrian Golan Heights must be stopped immediately. Making negative statements and taking positions that contradict and violate the principles upon which the process is based, namely "land for peace", must cease. Acting as though one party's public opinion matters more than that of the others' is a critical mistake.



If all the parties approach "the process" guided by these principles, the doors will be wide open for a successful conclusion, hopefully by the end of this year. All the needed elements are available for the achievement of this objective. The Arab side is steadfast in its commitment to peace. Mr Barak took office with an impressive majority and a clear mandate. The United States stands – as always – able and ready to exert every effort in support of the process and its role is welcomed and trusted by all parties. The international community is also prepared to make an effective contribution to our endeavour. This is a golden opportunity that must not be missed and indeed *cannot* be missed. The frustration and anger among the people of the region is quite high, and their sense of disappointment at the constant delays and the missed deadlines is not to be underestimated. Their trust and confidence in the credibility of the process has been seriously eroded.

In light of these considerations, President Mubarak was ready to help in and facilitate the conclusion of the Sharm El Sheikh Memorandum, and his efforts bore fruit. It is unfortunate that the first Sharm El Sheikh timeframe was not implemented fully. President Mubarak was, however, still prepared to help in maintaining the momentum, by hosting President Arafat and Prime Minister Barak once again in Sharm El Sheikh, to witness their agreement on a new schedule for the remaining issues. It is now imperative that the new timeframe is abided by strictly; and that the negotiations towards reaching a permanent status agreement by September 2000 proceed in a credible manner.

On the Syrian track, the land for peace principle cannot be avoided. Full withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the 4 June 1967 borders, in implementation of Security Council Resolution 242, which is the basis of the Peace Process is the corner stone for reaching peace between Syria and Israel. Israel's concerns on this track must certainly be addressed on the negotiating table and Syria has agreed to that. But they cannot take precedence or command priority over the issue of withdrawal. All matters must be addressed equally, fairly and in parallel if this track is to conclude successfully.

The logic and rationale of the "process" that was designed in Madrid, its terms of reference and its "code of conduct" are sound.

If adhered to in good faith, they can lead the region to just and lasting peace agreements that will close the file of the Arab-Israeli conflict. However, peace as a "*regional state of being*", in its comprehensive sense, is a broader concept, that is built upon the Peace Process and its results. It also transcends higher and broader objectives. In other words, the successful conclusion of the "process" must not be the end of the road, but rather the solid foundation upon which the Middle East can secure a future of stability and prosperity for coming generations. This "post-Peace Process" endeavour entails a number of diverse undertakings that result in new and different patterns of relations in the region. This will include, among other things, regional security, economic interaction and positive collective integration in the new "global market" as well as address other areas of tension and concern in the Middle East.

One of the first and more important matters that must be dealt with is ensuring regional security which is a fundamental requirement for the future of the Middle East. But the question is, whose security are we talking about? Is it the security of one party, regardless of the needs of others? Is it the limited perspective of the security of individual states? If we go down this road, we will be committing a grave mistake that future generations will pay for dearly.

Our approach must be wider and deeper. It must look at the region in a holistic manner, viewing it as an entity not merely as a group of individual parties or individual states. It must transcend narrow objectives of security to encompass the larger requirements of *regional security and security for all*. In this respect, we cannot escape addressing the armament situation in the Middle East in terms of its vast stockpiles, the rampant arms race and the danger of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons.

We must build a regional security regime, based on the principle of equal rights and obligations, aimed at achieving military balance and enhancing equal security at the lowest level of armaments; a regime that is designed to limit certain conventional weapons, eliminate all weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, and to elaborate a network of confidence building measures to avoid misunderstandings and misperceptions. This

regime will have to effectively address the deep disequilibrium in legal obligations undertaken by the regional parties in the field of weapons of mass destruction, in particular with regards to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). We cannot proceed with a situation where all regional states are in an indefinite commitment to NPT, while one country's capabilities are totally unchecked. This permeates the Middle East with a sense of strategic insecurity and threatens to set in motion a vortex of arms race, accumulation of weapons and critical suspicion that seriously contradicts our effort at settling the region and reducing tensions.

To deal with this dangerous state of affairs, we must strive diligently towards establishing a regional regime that ensures equal security for all at the lowest level of armament, including arms control and reduction schemes and the establishment of a zone free of all weapons of mass destruction, as well as a network of confidence building measures. For this purpose, a working group on arms control and regional security (ACRS) was established within the multilateral track of the Peace Process. The Steering Committee of the multilateral track emphasised the need to reach a comprehensive agenda for ACRS, and called for a dialogue among the parties for this purpose, with the help of the co-sponsors. We stand ready to do so. We hope Israel will respond in kind.

I emphasise in this regard, that Egypt does not raise this question in the context of the Arab-Israeli conflict but rather in the framework of addressing regional security in an endeavour to transform the Middle East from an area of tension and instability to one of tranquility and safety, for the benefit of all its parties and peoples.

Another important endeavour that will deepen the scope of peace is regional co-operation in different fields – economic, commercial, environmental, etc. Interaction and integration among the peoples of the Middle East must cement the peace agreements that we hope to conclude. We must reach a stage where our borders will be open for the free movement of people and the flow of trade, capital and investments. This will create a network of mutual benefits and interests that will make it unaffordable for any party to threaten

or violate regional stability. Moreover, this will also facilitate the integration of the Middle East, as a holistic region, in the new drive towards globalisation and the creation of a world market. This is a trend that no party or region can afford to be isolated from.

We are however cognisant of the fact that regional co-operation cannot be fruitful or beneficial unless it proceeds in a conducive environment. If our aim is to create and enhance channels for people-to-people interaction, then we must realise that "the people" will not fully engage unless they feel confident that the Peace Process is developing positively.

The successful conclusion of the Peace Process that we hope for will create a new atmosphere in the Middle East. The Arab-Israeli conflict, which has governed the relations among regional parties for over fifty years, will have come to an end. We must be prepared for this situation. The new and different pattern of relations will need new channels and new venues. I have briefly touched on two areas that are related to this matter, arms control and regional economic co-operation. Yet, there are other fields and other considerations.

### **The League of Arab States**

The new era may require new regional arrangements, structures and fora. Other regions have had similar experiences and we can draw on them. The OSCE is one example that some may contemplate. It is certainly worth studying seriously; I must however point out that the establishment of such a structure in the Middle East, useful as it is, must not be for the purpose of replacing existing ones, in particular the League of Arab States. The Arab League, which is the oldest regional organisation, was formed as a translation and an embodiment of an existing Arab identity, with common history, heritage and value system. This identity will remain and so will the structures that stem from it.

### **Iraq**

The stability of the Middle East calls for an in-depth look at Iraq's future. It is no longer feasible to deal with Iraq only on the basis of the past or current circumstances. We must start to look

ahead and to consider how the present will affect the future of Iraq and its place in the region, as an integral part thereof. Iraq has always been an important player in the Middle East. Its stability is an essential component of regional stability. This must not be overlooked while we think of Iraq's future, and that of the Middle East. Looking ahead to the future, is it in anyone's interest or in the interest of the region to leave Iraq with a broken people, a fragmented society and a disintegrated economic infrastructure? The current Security Council discussions aiming at the suspension of sanctions can be a step in the right direction. We hope it reaches a resolution that ensures positive co-operation between Iraq and the Council, and lets its people see that there is light at the end of the tunnel. In this regard, it must be emphasised that "suspension" of sanctions, while it will be welcomed, is not a substitute for "lifting" them according to the provisions of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

## Sudan

Sudan and the Horn of Africa at large are another crucial factor for the future Middle East and its stability. Sudan is a vast nation with vast potentials. Its stability is an integral part of the security of the Middle East, and of Africa as a whole. For us in Egypt, Sudan is one of the most important factors to our immediate national security, and is as important as the Middle East peace process. In this vein, we must address Sudan's current problem with an eye to the future. It must be realised that its problem is far more complex than a civil war between north and south. It is a political problem, not a racial or religious one. It is a dispute over the political structure of Sudan, not over its religion or religions or even identity. It is in the light of those factors that we must deal with the Sudanese question. We must therefore seek a solution that ensures equal participation for all in the rebuilding of Sudan, *and preserves its territorial integrity*. The issue can never be resolved by dividing the country into small unsustainable entities. This will not guarantee stability and security, *not among the Sudanese, within Sudan and not within the region*. This is the rationale and *raison d'etre* of the Egyptian-Libyan initiative. It is based on the premise that the only effective solution lies in dialogue and reconciliation among all the factions, not simply between two general groupings. The international

community is currently seized with the situation, and quite rightly so. All interested parties are invited to co-ordinate their efforts and complement each other in order to reach a potent resolution to this question, so that Sudan may live in harmony, prosperity and unity.

### **Turkey and Iran**

The future of the Middle East will not be defined by the relations among its Arab parties or between Arabs and Israelis, but also by relations with other players. I wish to take a brief look at two of them: Turkey and Iran.

Turkey's historical ties with the region are long and varied. From the Hittites to the Eastern Roman Empire, and from the Ottoman era to the post-Kemalist modern Turkey, Turkey has been interacting in different ways in and with the Middle East. Recently, there have been certain concerns in the Arab World about Turkey's role and policies. The two sides should work together to overcome them. Turkey and the Arab World cannot afford a tense or uncomfortable relationship. It is essential to deal with the issue of relations between Turkey and the Arab World in the spirit of common, rather than opposing, interests to the benefit of the region at large.

What is said of Turkey's role is equally true in the case of Iran. It is also true that Iran's future role is a vital factor for the stability of the region. Over the past number of years and due to a certain political outlook, there was tension and suspicion between Iran and a number of Arab parties. In the present, several areas are witnessing progress. A new page must be turned in order to resume a fruitful, healthy and normal interaction between Iran and the Arab World, and its integration into the wider regional perspective, in the interest of all parties.

### **Globalisation**

If we move from the regional to the global dynamics, we find that a number of interrelated trends are in motion within the folds of the push towards globalisation. I wish to address one of them: what is being labeled as a "clash of civilisations." As the world is moving rapidly towards open markets and open channels of communication leading to fruitful interaction, we hear voices of

skeptic Cassandras warning that this openness will result in a "clash of civilisations". They claim that different civilisational values will come too close for confrontation. They argue that there is an inherent, generic, contradiction between certain Western value systems and those of other societies. Unfortunately, this doomsday scenario is directed mostly against the Arab/Muslim World and its norms.

It is a dangerous trend and it must be dealt with effectively. Our difference must be a source of strength not a reason for panic. We must draw on them to benefit and complement one another, rather than to scare our societies and summon up images of tension and forms of xenophobia and intolerance. It is not realistic to work towards eliminating commercial and economic barriers while erecting societal and civilisational ones. The Berlin Wall, which divided Europe, must not be reconstructed between the Western and Arab/Muslim Worlds. It is not feasible to call for tolerance and coexistence within one society or one state while denying it at the global level. This is a fundamental issue that must be tackled urgently if we are to secure the integration of the Middle East and many other regions in the future global society.

### **Conclusion**

As we turn the page of this most troubled and turbulent century, we must look to the future with determination and vision. We must rekindle the spirit of those who dreamt of building new lives and opening new vistas of prosperity and welfare, those who sought to live in peace and harmony in a world where the rule of law, equality, justice, civilisational interaction and economic co-operation reign supreme.

The Middle East has its share of the pains and agonies of the past century. It must equally have its share of the hopes and aspirations of the coming one. It must take its rightful place in building a New World and benefit from its promises and opportunities. It is therefore time we work for that, and deal with today's situation from the standpoint of how it will shape tomorrow, so that our region will enjoy peace, security, stability and prosperity and positively in the new global society contributing to its advancement and reaping its fruits.

# Dealing with the Afghanistan-Pakistan Cauldron : The Global Perspective

MAJ GEN VINOD SAIGHAL, VSM (RETD)

## THE CAULDRON SIMMERS

**T**he 'Afghanistan-Pakistan Cauldron' (hereafter referred to as the A-P Cauldron, or more aptly just the Cauldron), indicates a region in turmoil. Afghanistan and Pakistan are not only in a state of ferment themselves, but the spillover from the Cauldron is causing concern in many parts of the world. Here is what the Chief Executive of Pakistan himself has to say on the subject. In an interview given in Rawalpindi to the Associated Press, he reportedly said: "Pakistan is one of the most difficult countries in the world to govern, smack in the middle of the most dangerous region in the world."

Exactly half a century earlier Owen Latimore had described the region as: "A whirlpool in which meet political currents flowing from China, Russia, India and the Moslem Middle East." A true enough description, but in 1950 the author could not have foreseen the disintegration of the powerful Soviet empire or, for that matter, the suddenness of its demise. The genesis of the post-World War II Afghan tragedy can be traced back to the competition for influence between many countries after the retreat of Great Britain as a great power. This study of the current situation confines itself to the vacuum resulting from the sudden collapse of the USSR. With its dissolution at the end of 1991 a new era of global geopolitics commenced whose effects were most pronounced in the A-P Cauldron.

The mobilisation of religious orthodoxy for giving battle to an entrenched ideology (communism), in a country under occupation (Afghanistan), makes an interesting case study in itself. Of greater interest at the present time is the study of the chilling transformation

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Text of the talk delivered at the USI on 9 August 2000.

Maj Gen Vinod Saighal, VSM, retired from the Directorate General of Military Training, Army Headquarters.

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that was engineered in the purely 'defensive' mobilisation of the religious orthodoxy (for vacating aggression) to one of 'offensive' religious fundamentalism with pan-Islamic overtones, capable of conducting terrorism on a global scale. Religious mobilisation by itself, however, could not have succeeded in repelling aggression without massive military and financial assistance.

Circumstances have since changed. Global alignments have changed. Foes have turned into friends. The Cauldron continues to simmer causing untold suffering to neighbours, no less to its own people. The sequence of countries mentioned in the title, Afghanistan-Pakistan, was not intended to follow the alphabetical progression from A to P. It is indicative of a grand reversal that could be taking place, might indeed have already taken place. It is no longer Afghanistan that provides the supposed strategic depth to Pakistan. It is Pakistan that now provides strategic back-up to the Taliban. It is a fatal embrace. Neither party can disengage unilaterally without delivering a body blow to the 'other'. The other, in the case of Pakistan, does not represent the state of Pakistan. It refers exclusively to the military-religious fundamentalist combine that seeks to perpetuate its hold on the state machinery through terror, or the potential for letting loose terror, or the threat of waging nuclear war.

Axially (the A-P axis), and internally in Pakistan, the tail has started wagging the dog. In the first case the Taliban factor impinges heavily on state policy and in the latter case the *jehadis* dictate terms to the Pakistan military. It is essential for the world to appreciate this point. Because when one talks of a nuclear Pakistan what is being talked about, in reality, is not the state of Pakistan but the combine that appears to be all powerful in the Afghan-Pak cauldron. Doubtless, the combine has suffered recent setbacks due to international pressure, prolonged drought in Afghanistan and the precarious economic situation of Pakistan. An impression is gaining ground that the combined effect of the setbacks might have enfeebled the regimes in power. The world would be playing into their hands should it mistake the tactical surface re-adjustments being carried out as a change of heart. In many respects, hidden from the public gaze, this combine is going from strength to strength.

The logic becomes irrefutable. The military controls the nuclear arsenal of Pakistan. The military is increasingly coming under the sway of the fundamentalists in Pakistan. The coupling of the military and the fundamentalists spawned the Taliban. The offspring is now a potent voice in the triad. Therefore, going purely by present trends, if not immediately, then certainly a few years down the road, the nuclear arsenal of Pakistan will be in the hands of this not so holy triad.

Currently, each of the elements forming the triad finds itself in a bind. The euphoria that the Taliban initially generated on first taking over has since dissipated. They have been successful mainly in alienating their neighbours. Internally there is simmering discontent. On the other side the Pakistani generals who run the country are in a similar situation. They were directly responsible for the Kargil debacle. Their gamble failed. Gamblers – especially military leaders – who lose are expected to pay the price. In this case they carried out a coup against the civilian government and made the erstwhile Prime Minister pay the price. They are thus left with no option but to continue with cross border terrorism in the desperate hope that the world will take note. There is nothing else that they can show for their misadventure.

The women of Afghanistan who suffered the most in the war-ravaged countryside are being brutally crushed as never before. It may not be long before the same treatment is extended to the liberated segments of Pakistan society. A far cry indeed from the dream of Pakistan's founding father. It has taken the military and the mullahs just fifty years to turn his legacy on its head. Here is what Mr Jinnah had to say on the status of women in a 1944 speech:

"No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you; we are *victims of evil customs*. It is a *crime against humanity* that our women are shut up within the four walls of the houses as prisoners. There is no sanction anywhere for the deplorable condition in which our women have to live" (Emphasis added).

As reported in *The Statesman* (30 July 2000), the recent arrest and imprisonment of an American grandmother – Mary MacMakin, 72, who spent 24 years as an aid worker and set up the Physiotherapy and Rehabilitation Support for Afghanistan (PARSA) in 1996 – signalled the start of a new wave of repression by the Islamic regime. She blames the development on the Taliban's heavy casualties in its annual summer offensive in the north. "It's put them in a bad mood and they are taking it out on women."

'Taking it out on women' seems to be a common feature of the military and the mullahs. The Pakistan Army perfected the technique in Bangladesh when they felt that things might turn out badly for them. They raped or killed a hundred thousand women or more. Not to be outdone the Taliban have gone a step further. They have set up the Ministry for the Prevention of Vice and the Promotion of Virtue. The world can actually feel the virtue emanating out of the A-P Cauldron.

The silent majority in Pakistan have been watching with dismay the gradual erosion of their liberties. The educated elite hope that world opinion will come to their rescue should things really get out of hand. These are vain hopes, of people unable to bestir themselves to oppose the creeping Talibanisation overtaking their land. They too have had ample warning. Should they fail to mobilise themselves to defeat the *jehadis*, while they are able to, they might have to meet the fate of the women of Afghanistan. The monsters being nurtured for cross border terrorism could well turn upon them one day. It has happened before. It can happen again.

Who created this frightening scenario? In the beginning, the United States and Saudi Arabia, to oppose Soviet domination. They were fighting their arch foe. They could not have known the outcome. Now the baton seems to have landed in the lap of China. It is fast becoming the most dominant player in the region. Having provided the Pakistan military with the wherewithal to wage nuclear war against India, the Chinese have become the principal benefactors of Pakistan and, by extension, the Taliban as well. The Chinese have been always superior strategists. They realise that by controlling the Pakistan military they, in fact, exercise or will soon

exercise *de facto* control over the potential for global mischief that inheres in the A-P cauldron. That is not to say that the Chinese encourage, or would wish to encourage, terrorism emanating from the Cauldron. It is not inconceivable that China, at some stage, might use its leverage to moderate the extremism in the region. Such speculation of a moderating influence will remain a big if. It will depend to an extent on the policies pursued by the United States in setting up a national or theatre missile defence shield in violation of the 1972 ABM Treaty. The Chinese strategic vision has always been masterly. Masterly or not, as in the earlier case, they too can never be sure of the outcome. Pakistan has already taken the decision to trade in nuclear materials. In the not too distant future they will undercut China in the rates offered for missiles as well. The Chinese should take heed.

Muslim fundamentalists are mass producing canon fodder in the name of *jihad*. Actually the term 'jihad' is a misnomer. It is a convenient tool for acquiring political power through violence. Young boys, not even in their teens, usually the surplus fifth and sixth sons from large and poor families, seldom the first or second, are lured away to be indoctrinated into fanaticism and hatred. A throw back to the dark ages of every race and religion; perfect emulation of what happened in Nazi Germany and continues to happen where such elements are in the ascendant elsewhere in the world.

### THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

It would be facile for the world at large to dismiss the hydra-headed monster being spawned in the A-P Cauldron as a regional problem affecting India, the Central Asian Republics (CAR), parts of Russia and some others. While it is a major problem for the neighbours, the global dimension of the problem is equally important. The United States could reach accommodation with the A-P authorities were their *bete noire*, Osama bin Laden, surrendered to them. Neither they, nor the American public, have yet realised that bin Laden is just the most public face of a deeper danger confronting them. In nearly ten thousand *madrasas* strewn across the Cauldron a few hundred thousand new bin Laden clones are well on their way to reaching productive maturity. Their testing grounds are the USA and India. Even more than Quranic verses,

what is dinned into their young minds is the fanatical utterance 'death to America and the *kafirs*' (in India).

The remainder of the world, currently uninvolved, can also not afford to push the issue under the carpet as a problem for the neighbours, Russia and the USA. Several entry points have been established in Europe. New bridgeheads are coming up elsewhere. Terrorism of the new variety, not linked to any specific issue, but political power play under the guise of religious fundamentalism knows no boundaries. It will strike where the handlers unleash their indoctrinated minions, mass-produced in the same way as any assembly line product.

An even deadlier menace is emerging from the A-P Cauldron, namely, criminals convicted for heinous offences are being promised their freedom should they undertake killings across the border. Not infrequently their targets turn out to be defenceless women and children, victims of indiscriminate bombings in the market place. It calls for not only international condemnation in the strongest terms, but *suo moto* action by the International Criminal Court, Interpol and other concerned international agencies.

At the moment, activity is mostly directed against India and a few other countries where the *jehadis* are active. If it remains unchecked, it is only a matter of time before such criminals are let loose on civilised society anywhere. It needs to be understood that criminals who have committed heinous crimes generally have psychopathic tendencies. Letting loose such individuals amongst law-abiding citizens should be deemed a crime against humanity. The guilt for such crimes rest with heads of organisations that use them for such ends as well as the heads of the concerned governments. They are as guilty as the criminals committing the outrages. Their prosecution should be authorised by the concerned international courts and international warrants for their arrest issued accordingly. It is one thing if underground 'criminal' organisations indulge in such activities. It is an entirely different matter if 'states' permit them as a policy. Should the international community not address the issue urgently, the world may well witness an increase of this activity worldwide.

Since the religious fundamentalist turmoil was fuelled in Pakistan consequent to General Zia-ul-Haq's need to garner support for the military regime, it is time to take another look at Pakistan in the new century from a global perspective. Pakistan served the interests of the West during the Cold War. So did many other nations around the world. The Cold War ended in the last century. The geopolitical compulsions of the 21st Century have changed considerably from the conditions obtaining in the post-World War II years. Today Pakistan is embarked on an enterprise whose global ramifications, if it remains unchecked, are far too serious to contemplate with equanimity. It is no longer playing regional politics. The military-mullah dispensation in that country is playing with fire.

While Kashmir continues to be a convenient *casus belli*, the religious significance is deeper, not only for India but for the world as well. Fundamentalist Islam, except on the fringes, was not a natural modern era phenomenon on the subcontinent. It became a religious ploy that suited interested groups in Pakistan, a sure-fire remedy for keeping them in business. The difference being that the rabidity at the fringes could become the norm should the world not act decisively. The combine in power, with military support from China, could soon be in a position to raise the nuclear ante at the subcontinental or global levels.

The Kashmir Valley was not a territorial prize *per se*. For the first set of raiders in 1947 the real prize was loot and rape. For their successors the prize is the quality referred to as 'Kashmiriyat'. A unique blend of *sufi* mysticism, religious tolerance and a liberal, joyous outlook on life that would be anathema to religious fundamentalists anywhere. They cannot accept 'a heaven on earth' with gurgling springs, laughing belles, haunting melodies and *joie de vivre* that over the centuries symbolised the beautiful Vale of Kashmir. A religious harmony that was a living challenge to their fundamentalism. For the A-P fundamentalists, it became their poisoned chalice. Were it to be allowed to continue to blossom, its heady fragrance of a tolerant, humanising creed would imperil their hold. The two are incompatible. Kashmiriyat had to be destroyed, whatever the cost. Kashmir is the red herring. Even

there, demographic swamping in Pakistan occupied Kashmir and the so-called Northern Areas (Gilgit, Baltistan) directly administered from Islamabad had rendered the plebiscite clause of the ancient UN resolution inoperative. Not to mention the ethnic cleansing that has been engineered through terrorist acts across the border.

Today the might of the USA is deployed worldwide to bring bin Laden to book. He can play hide and seek indefinitely in the mountain remoteness of Afghanistan. What will happen when the multiplying legions fan out across the globe, take their terrifying toll of the non-believers, and scurry back to their sanctuary, beyond the pale of national and international law enforcement. Technology does not suffice to deal with them in the rugged terrain that obtains. This is no longer a band of terrorists threatening the world order. It is the state itself, which is on the way to becoming the master terrorist of the globe. Soon it will be able to nourish all fundamentalist groups from their *madrasas*. Links have already been established with the drug mafia. Does the world seriously want India to countenance with equanimity the talibanisation of the Vale of Kashmir?

Unless the A-P Cauldron is dealt with firmly on a global basis, it will not be long before the contagion spreads to other countries having sizeable Islamic populations. In this category must be included Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh, Myanmar and many countries in Central Asia and the Middle East – areas that hold almost eighty per cent of the global oil reserves. Looked at globally – de-linked from country-specific fixations like bin Laden, Chechnya, Xinjiang, Kashmir and the like – the problem assumes a different perspective.

It is because of the fillip being given by the fundamentalist cells implanted from the Cauldron on ethnic divides in other countries that the world is witnessing increasing ethnic cleansing in areas that were earlier relatively free from this scourge. In the process economic development suffers and backwardness and poverty are accentuated. Ethnic cleansing in Indonesia got out of hand after the economic collapse of Indonesia; and because of the heightened insecurity caused by the daily killings nobody would like to invest in those areas perpetuating the vicious cycle of violence and poverty. Terrorism is considered by some to be the most flagrant

form of defiance of the rule of law. How right! In areas where the militants and the military rule, law courts are replaced by kangaroo courts.

### THE PREDICAMENT OF THE NON-MILITANT PAKISTANIS

Historians writing about the French Revolution make the point that the disoriented people of France – nearly 27 million of them – allowed Robespierre and his small band of followers to actually coerce them through terror into accepting his dictatorship. What followed is well known. Over a quarter million people were sent to jail and about forty thousand guillotined after mock trials. When the people finally mustered the will to stand up, it was found that at the outset the hard core had consisted of just a handful of people, precisely twenty-two. The people of Pakistan and, for that matter, law abiding citizens everywhere who see a gradual erosion of their freedoms under *jehad* type dispensations must realise that they alone are the guardians of their liberty. If they do not organise themselves to resist terror when it 'first' starts manifesting itself they too could go under one day.

The military and the mullahs are exporting *jehad* in the name of religion. It is ironic. As state policy, it is not being exported from any of the Arab countries that were the fountainhead of Islam. Genetically, the vast majority of the Muslims in Pakistan are converts from the older religions of India. So, is it the ardour of the converted, needing to proclaim their *bona fides* from the rooftops that one is witnessing? The behaviour is bizarre to say the least. No one in the Arab world, to whom they take a bow, is clapping. In fact there are not many places left in the world, besides India, where the ordinary Pakistani is welcome. Who is to blame for this state of affairs? The military, the mullahs or the average Pakistani citizen for not standing up! Unless the people of Pakistan themselves decide to throw off their yoke, the world could well decide to leave them to their fate.

Diplomatic isolation, which is a recent phenomenon, could become a permanent fixture should the military-mullah combine continue to brandish its new-found nuclear might. It is not adding



to their status but only making the world aware of the need for concerted global action. Even the Chinese who supplied them the wherewithal should be having second thoughts.

### GLOBAL ACTION TO DEAL WITH THE MENACE

The question then arises, "how does the world deal with this growing global menace emanating from the Cauldron"? Regional initiatives are obviously an important factor. But this is easier said than done. Geopolitical imbalances make neighbours in regions where stability has yet to be achieved suspicious of each other's motives. This is true in most parts of Asia and Africa. Whatever the state or nature of regional dissonance there are troublesome aspects that need remedial action at the global level. Foremost among these is the status of women. Does the world wish to see the Taliban model of dealing with women become the norm in the whole of Pakistan, Central Asia, Malaysia, Indonesia and other parts of the world where fundamentalism is allowed to establish itself?

The world of the 21st Century cannot countenance the barbaric practices of earlier eras of human history where women were trampled under foot as a matter of course. It cannot remain a mute witness to institutionalised savagery on any segment of the population. In cases where it is undertaken as a policy sanctified by religious or any other dispensation of a similar nature it has to be fought by the global community as a whole. Inhuman practices from the dark ages enforced upon hapless citizens through brutality and terror demand that the perpetrators of these misdeeds on women and children be themselves brought to book. A distinguished writer had this to say on the subject: "Please do not try to find points of contact with barbarism." Instead of 'trying to find points of contact with barbarism' the answer would lie in demanding compliance with global norms for the treatment of women before any aid is dispensed in the Cauldron, regardless of drought, flood, or other natural or man-made calamities. Aid would become conditional to educational institutions being set up for women with the help of global agencies in demarcated compounds. Aid sent to regimes of this nature first invariably fattens the tyrant and only leftovers are made available to the remainder.

This is not simply a matter concerning any given country where fanatical elements have seized power through violence. Whatever the initial justification, it ceases to have relevance where the medieval codes have to be continuously enforced through coercive action – with the greatest vehemence against women. If given the freedom to choose, the majority of the women under the Taliban dispensation would unhesitatingly be glad to remove the yoke.

### Nuclear Proliferation

The other matter requiring attention is the threat of nuclear proliferation. It is no longer a threat in being. Under the 'smoke screen' of threats to use nuclear weapons against India – an exercise in absurdity considering India's size and ability to retaliate decisively – the real work of clandestine nuclear proliferation of suitcase bombs for use by bin Laden clones could be well under way. It is the latter nuclear threat that is crying for attention as it threatens the whole world. Delay in neutralising this threat at source would be unpardonable. While it could take decades for the major powers of the world to harmonise their working for safeguarding the planet as a whole, actions for limiting nuclear terrorism that cannot be postponed are listed below:

- Putting a *cordon sanitaire* around the A-P Cauldron. The Russians have already begun to do so jointly with the Central Asian Republics. The United States has to co-ordinate with Russia to check this global menace. Geopolitical rivalries can be put on the backburner for the time being.
- China too will have to be co-opted to make the sanitisation effective.
- Similar co-operation will have to be effected between India and Iran and possibly the Gulf States.
- A global protocol, or Security Council declaration, on nuclear terrorism to the effect that: "wherever nuclear weapons are used by terrorists or nuclear blackmail effected through terrorism no country would be permitted to provide sanctuary to the terrorists and all concessions obtained under threat of

nuclear terrorism would remain voided *post facto*". Additionally, the heads of government, armed forces and agencies backing terrorists using nuclear blackmail will be prosecuted for crimes against humanity and international warrants for their arrest issued under the directions of the International Criminal Court.

- Russia and the USA to put into immediate effect a joint overwatch of the Cauldron. It should be made known that at the first sign of any nuclear-tipped missile taking off in any direction, the two powers will be obliged to jointly neutralise all existing facilities capable of producing or launching such weapons. The riposte for nuclear blackmail would be similar. The onus for disproving the provenance of such weapons would lie with the authorities in the Cauldron.
- Russia, taking off from the strengthened defensive deployment in CAR, could make the declaration unilaterally, should the USA show hesitation to make a joint declaration. (Russia has to realise that the battle for Chechnya cannot be won in Chechnya. It will have to be fought in the A-P Cauldron by means other than the deployment of ground forces).

### THE SUBCONTINENTAL RESPONSE

The most important aspect that must be understood by the people of the subcontinent and the world is that the Kashmir question of the new century has little bearing with the problem that surfaced over fifty years ago. Too many externalities have been superimposed. These include: demographic swamping in areas occupied by Pakistan (modelled on the pattern perfected in Tibet and Xinjiang); the induction of foreign mercenaries and criminals; displacement forced on the population through terrorism; and declaration of *jihad* by quasi-independent religious groups who are in a position to challenge the authority of the state.

Put more succinctly: "the crisis facing the subcontinent and points north, west and east is no longer limited to the question of territorial adjustments. It has assumed the larger ideological dimension of *militant* Islam versus *liberal* Islam". The absence of any real democracy, proliferation of small arms, and easy access

to drug money have all played their part in keeping the Cauldron on the boil. Up till now the brunt has been largely borne by India because Pakistan was able to convince the Western world that the problem related to Kashmir and nothing else. It took a full fifty years for the rest of the world to come to the same conclusion as the Government of India, that Kashmir provided a convenient camouflage for the larger game plan. By the time the realisation came, elements pushing the fundamentalist creed had been immeasurably strengthened. When the West saw the light of day it was almost too late.

China meanwhile had its own strategy for the Great Game. It stepped in with a type of weapons support that made the earlier support given by the West pale into comparative insignificance. Whatever China's reasoning, by an unintended quirk of fate, a situation has been created that could actually help to ease India's burden in the longer term, provided the country continues to meet the terrorist challenges with unabated vigour and does not create greater strategic vulnerability in its northeast. This requires elaboration.

Regardless of all else Pakistan, while rattling the nuclear sabre, is well on the road to self-destruction. Not because of Indian action but because of the global reaction to a potential threat that could as easily manifest itself in the underbelly of Europe or an American city as it does in Chechnya. Viewed in that light – by providing the wherewithal to forces in the A-P Cauldron who are inimical to global harmony – China emerges as a strong sustainer of global instability through the potential of nuclear terrorism. To date, it has been taken for granted that the targets of the *jehadis* are primarily in India, America, Central Asia and Russia. It is only a matter of time before several East Asian countries with mixed populations start feeling the heat. China's immediate neighbourhood too could become hot at several points.

It would be facile, and possibly tragic, to call the struggle that will follow as a 'clash of civilisations'. It is certainly not the case. To give a civilisational veneer to the indoctrinated fanatics spilling out of the *madrasas* in the Cauldron or those who mastermind the

terror would not only be a travesty of fact but a monumental error of judgement. Should the highly imaginative theory going by that name gain currency it could deal a body blow to Islam not only in the Cauldron, but in many other parts of the world as well.

India is perhaps the only country that can prevent that tragic outcome. Regardless of differences with its hostile neighbour to the West, it is home to nearly 130 million Muslims. They are Indian citizens. While some among them may have been subverted by the blandishments of the militants, the vast majority of them have contributed considerably to the progress that India has made since independence. Without saying so openly many Pakistanis, not wedded to militancy, do privately admit that India remains the only real bulwark against the terminal madness engulfing their state. Thus, while the world puts into effect the tough measures to contain the menace within the Cauldron, India's efforts – besides toughening its stance against terrorism – should be directed towards strengthening liberal Islam in India and the subcontinent.

It is not simply a coincidence that for over fifty years the brunt of the menace of terrorism has been borne by the few million people of the beautiful Kashmir Valley. It continues to remain the focus of the *jehadis*. The reason has been alluded to earlier in the paper. The Valley, in a manner of speaking, was a shining example of the Sufi spirit in India. The militant beast comes not to ravish the beauty, but to destroy it. The tragic tale unfolds poignantly in the Akshara Theatre, New Delhi documentary, *The Kashmir Story* and docudrama, *The Sufi Way*. If the beauty perishes Kashmir perishes. Should the beauty remain the beast is slain.

Those at the helm of affairs in India have also to realise that Islam, although a transplant, helped to create one of the most magnificent Islamic heritages of the past thousand years. Beyond the killings and suppression of the adherents of the older Indian faiths lay the synthesis of a unique blend that led to a cultural efflorescence, the parallel to which would be difficult to find except in the European renaissance. Hence, an essential element of the fight against Islamic militants which India, the Central Asian Republics and other countries facing this threat may have been

neglecting – by concentrating solely on the military dimension – is the need to strengthen liberal elements at the grass roots. India has to take the lead in preventing the *jehadisation* of Islam.

The vast majority of ordinary Muslims do not wish to see their religion degraded in this fashion. They have failed to organise themselves against the fanatical fringes in their respective countries, simply because the latter happens to have embraced terror. The excerpt that follows sums up the situation admirably:

"Yet, for all the cruelty and obscurantism associated with religion, hidden within the great traditions of faith are precious resources for the future welfare of humanity and these are *too important to be abandoned to the extremists*" (Emphasis added). [Marcus Braybrooke, *IIC Quarterly*, Spring 2000.]

Extremism can only be established through extreme violence visited upon innocent, law-abiding people. Once established, it can be perpetuated only through mindless savagery. Exactly what is being witnessed in Afghanistan, and that which is sought to be imposed on parts of Kashmir. But the world has just started emerging from one dark tunnel of this nature. Twenty years ago, the experiment of extremism was tried out in Iran. But after decades of suffering the people have had enough of the draconian enforcement codes. They have started mustering the courage to start protesting. They have a long road ahead.

Nobody, however, doubts that a moderate and tolerant regime, which is the natural state for any civilised society, will eventually be established in Iran. Do the people of Pakistan, who still have not gone under as a country wish to again enter the dark tunnel. The difference would be that this particular tunnel might have a blocked exit. The Iranians have started seeing the light. Iranian reformers have started openly accusing their government of past excesses:

"Your management of the judiciary in the past several months has not only created hopelessness among the people, but it is also leading to a *future full of anxiety*

*and apprehension*". (Emphasis added). (*Times of India*, 17 July 2000).

The people of Pakistan, mainly on account of apathy and inertia, are entering the region of darkness. India might no longer be interested in pulling them out at the other end. The words that follow have been spoken by a Pakistani:

".....perhaps does not realise that a sovereign Pakistan will go more swiftly to its doom than a Pakistan restrained by its external obligations". Khaled Ahmed, Lahore-based journalist, in *The Pioneer*, 15 July 2000.

### FUTURE PROJECTIONS

The moderate leader of Iran, President Khatami, in a moment of eloquence, spoke of a 'Dialogue of the Civilisations'. Wise words from a wise leader, aware of the difficulties that will have to be surmounted in mitigating the hardships to his people resulting from past excesses. Even greater is the difficulty of prising loose from the vice-like grip of the self-anointed repositories of the ultimate wisdom the draconian powers still wielded by them. The question is not only relevant for Islam but for the world that has achieved scientific breakthroughs of a type that could not have been even remotely guessed at by the founders of the great religions of the world.

Therefore, should the moderate and liberal elements amongst the people of the region practicing Islam succeed in overcoming the obscurantists whose practice of the great religion begins and ends with the whip the prospect for global harmony would be immensely strengthened.

Should the powers who are in a position to influence events in the Cauldron temporarily sink their differences to neutralise the menace emanating from it so that not even a residual strain remains the world of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century would start looking a different place. Were a condition of stability to prevail the advantages that would accrue to almost every country are inconceivable at the present juncture.

First and foremost, like the days of yore, Marco Polo type of journeys along the Silk Route would be possible, to and fro, across the vast Central Asian expanse for people from the north, south, east and west. A family from Vietnam could plan to drive to Helsinki, a Chinese family to London, a Swedish family to Goa. The possibilities for easier travel across the Eurasian landmass are endless. Economic benefits would be unsurpassable. Fifty years down the road national boundaries would only be delineated on maps. The *kabuliwallah* of the subcontinental folklore of an earlier era would again roam freely in the bazaars of Mumbai, Calcutta and even Shanghai. The Ladakhi would be able to cross Tibet in peace and reach Korea, if he wished to do so.

The Central Asian Republics would become a loose confederation along the lines of the European Union, sharing their oil and water for the benefit of the region as a whole. Pipelines could be laid from anywhere to anywhere, following alignments that were economically and ecologically the best options, bringing prosperity in their wake from the Caspian Sea to Colombo.

The 'Demilitarisation of the Himalayas as an Ecological Imperative' could commence within the next two to three years. The proposal put forward by the Ecology Monitors Society in November 1998 at an international conference held at New Delhi could then be progressed with greater confidence.

Each one of these aspects which might appear to be unachievable now takes on a different hue once the true measure of a demilitarised, 'defundamentalised' Cauldron are viewed from the perspective outlined above. By just excising the cancer from the Cauldron a dozen other trouble spots will subside. The vista which will then open out for Central and South Asia would be truly magnificent.



## Dealing with Pakistan

G PARTHASARATHY

"It is our aim to weaken India from within – and we can do it". These were the words of a former Director General of the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate (ISI) at a conference in Islamabad a few months ago, organised by the *Jang* Group of Newspapers. The conference was attended by a number of intellectuals, writers, journalists and senior foreign diplomats. The subject of discussion was the role of the ISI. While some foreign diplomats expressed surprise and dismay at such a frank articulation of views by a distinguished figure from the Pakistani military establishment, I personally welcomed this frank exposition of the national aims of the military-intelligence establishment in Islamabad. It is, after all, well known that the ISI intends to spare no effort to "bleed" India in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere. It perceives such an effort as imperative in order to secure its larger strategic objectives that cannot countenance the existence of a secular, pluralistic, democratic and economically vibrant India, respected and welcomed in the comity of nations.

When I returned to Pakistan in February 1999 after a lapse of nearly fifteen years, Pakistani society had changed considerably. Pakistan under its military dictator Zia ul Haq was then the centre of international attention as the so-called "Frontline State" in the war against Soviet Forces in Afghanistan. Given its location, Pakistan was sought after and overwhelmed with attention and assistance from the Western World in the "Jihad" against the "evil empire". Weapons and money poured in as the Reagan Administration turned a blind eye to the nuclear weapons programme of its protege. With the economy growing at 6.4 per cent in the 1980s, few people would have imagined what disaster was in store for Pakistan, and indeed for regional and global stability, as a result of the Pakistani involvement in Afghanistan.

The Afghan "Jihad" had its inevitable consequences. It led to the introduction of the "Gun Culture" in Pakistan and to the

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Shri G Parthasarathy is former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan. He is currently with the Centre for Policy Research, New Delhi.

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emergence of sectarian Islamic groups, closely linked to the ISI. These groups not only preached hatred and violence against India, but also spread their violent and extremist activities to Algeria, Egypt, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgystan, Chechnya and even places as far away as the CIA Headquarters in Langley and the Philippines. They and their political patrons fathered and nurtured the Taliban in Afghanistan. The war against the Soviets succeeded primarily because of the will of the Afghans and the huge and virtually unlimited military and economic assistance provided by the United States and its allies. But, instead of recognising this fact, the Pakistan military-intelligence establishment chose to convince itself that the Afghan conflict established that its political, territorial and strategic objectives could be achieved by adopting a policy of support for "militant Islam". This perception is the basis of policies now practiced by militant groups, supported by or linked to the ISI whether in Kashmir or in Chechnya. With the passage of time these groups have only grown stronger and their nexus with the military-intelligence establishment has strengthened.

The social and political atmosphere in Pakistan has also inevitably been affected by the country's growing economic woes, as savings, investments and growth decline and unemployment rises, with growing manifestations of industrial units becoming sick and closing down. The last decade saw continuing decline in savings and investment and massive increases in loan defaults. National Savings that were low even in the 1980s at 14.7 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), declined to 11 per cent in 1995 and are currently at a level of around 12.2 per cent. There is little hope of Pakistan achieving the growth rates being experienced by India and East Asia unless its rates of savings and investment are doubled. There is nothing to indicate that there are any serious efforts to achieve this in the foreseeable future. While the country is blessed with the most fertile agricultural lands in the subcontinent, performance in the agricultural sector has been far below the immense potential. Pakistan does have a surplus of wheat this year, but has been a regular importer of even this basic foodgrain.

The economic position on the external front makes for an even more dismal reading. While there were some hopes of the country receiving increasing amounts of Foreign Direct Investment

(FDI) in the early 1990s, the economic downturn following the nuclear tests has resulted in a virtual end to foreign investment. No new enterprises are being launched, as foreign investors are extremely unwilling to act till there are clear and irreversible signs of an economic turnaround. Investor confidence has also been shaken by arbitrary revocation of important power purchase agreements concluded in the days when Benazir Bhutto was Prime Minister. While the country is well endowed in resources of natural gas, viable policies to attract foreign investment even in this sector have yet to be put in place.

Apart from the virtual end to inflows of foreign investments for new enterprises, the prospects for a rapid growth in exports are also continuously declining. Imports of capital machinery have declined from 27 per cent of total imports in 1991-92 to 17.8 per cent last year. Annual industrial growth declined from 8.2 per cent in the 1980s to 4.7 per cent in the period 1990-95 and to a mere 2.3 per cent in the period 1995-2000. This has naturally led to a situation of declining surpluses for exports and indeed of virtual industrial stagnation. A substantial package of rescheduling of external debt repayments by the Paris Club and the London Club has saved Pakistan from becoming a loan defaulter. But this package comes to an end on 31 December 2000 and Pakistan will have to seek yet another assistance package of debt rescheduling if it is to avoid becoming a defaulter next year. Given the overall national economic scenario, there appears to be little prospect of the country being able to meet its external debt obligations for at least the next decade. And even this will be possible only if Pakistan sheds its grandiose ambitions about its international and regional importance and learns to live within its means.

In overall terms, rates of economic growth declined from 6.45 per cent in the 1980s to 4.7 per cent in the period 1990-95 and to a mere 3.5 per cent in 1995-2000. Independent estimates put the rate of growth of population at around 2.75 per cent. Per Capita Income in Pakistan has therefore stagnated in the last five years. With expenditure on debt repayments and defence consuming virtually its entire current revenues, Pakistan has inevitably faced a situation where there is no additional investment in crucial areas

like public education. The net result has been that poor families have been compelled to send their children to religious "Madrassas" where they receive only what is said to be religious education, but no knowledge of either the contemporary world or of relevance to future productive employment. The mushrooming of these "Madrassas", or "Nurseries of Fanaticism" as a well-known Pakistani journalist described them, has led to the emergence of young minds rooted in bigoted, medieval ideas of "Jihad" and values which extol the ideology of religious zealots and extremists like the Taliban. It is such young men who have no hesitation in taking to arms to kill Shias in sectarian violence within Pakistan or to join the cause of "Jihad" in Kashmir, Afghanistan or Chechnya.

When Benazir Bhutto was elected Prime Minister in 1988 in the first fair elections held in Pakistan since the Bangladesh conflict, the hope was expressed that a democratic Pakistan would concentrate first and foremost on the economic well being and prosperity of its people. But sadly, amendments to the constitution by Zia ul Haq severely curtailed the powers of the Prime Minister who was constantly checkmated by an opinionated President and a power hungry Army Chief. Benazir was soon eased out of office and Pakistan's subsequent history has been marked by a continuing struggle for power between the President, the Army and the Prime Minister. It is true that neither Benazir Bhutto nor Nawaz Sharif were able to provide good governance or strengthen democratic institutions and traditions. The Army would in any case never have given them an adequate say on crucial issues of national security, especially on relations with India, Afghanistan, or nuclear policy. When Nawaz Sharif did try to assert his authority, the Army struck on 12 October 1999 and Pakistan slid back to yet another spell of military rule.

The Kargil conflict last year was a product of the mindset of the Pakistan Army, rooted in the belief that the Indian Army was so demoralised by its continuing counter-insurgency role in Jammu and Kashmir that it would neither have the will nor the ability to retake the Kargil heights. General Musharraf and Lt Gen Aziz Khan genuinely believed that they would be able to occupy the Kargil heights till the onset of the snows. They calculated that this

would lead to our forces in Siachen being cut off and that growing international concern at the possibility of escalation would lead to a revival of international interest and internationalisation of the Kashmir issue. Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad supported this view. Nawaz Sharif, who had little knowledge of ground conditions or strategic imperatives, broadly approved of the idea, on the basis of sketchy details given to him. Given its supreme arrogance, the military in Pakistan was certainly not going to share operational details with a mere civilian, even if he was the country's elected Prime Minister!

The Kargil conflict was a decisive turning point in the Kashmir issue. Pakistan's military calculations were upset by the tremendous firepower that was brought to bear on the intruders, who nevertheless fought bravely. They also did not expect that unacclimatised Indian infantry would actually successfully assault and take high mountain positions. Secondly, by displaying commendable restraint and not crossing the Line of Control (LOC) in the face of provocation, India won international acclaim. Pakistan's blatant adventurism resulted in the world community recognising and asserting the vital importance of Pakistan respecting the sanctity of the Line of Control. Kargil thus brought nothing but military humiliation and international isolation for Pakistan. The world community made it clear that it would not countenance a country possessing nuclear weapons acting in such a rash and irresponsible manner.

These developments now pose a challenge to us. How should we deal with a neighbour that is economically bankrupt, politically fragile and yet has an insatiable thirst for "parity" with us? We cannot lose sight of the fact that the Pakistan military-intelligence establishment strongly believes that to achieve such "parity", the destabilisation of India is a desirable, necessary and achievable objective. In these circumstances, the cardinal reality to be borne in mind is that the Pakistan military establishment will continue on its present path till it realises that the diplomatic, military, economic and strategic costs of persisting with its present policies far exceed any benefits. Thus, when Defence Minister George Fernandes or the Chief of the Army Staff General Ved Malik speak of a "limited

war," the concept should not be seen in exclusively military terms. The world community and Pakistan are merely being told that continuing efforts by Pakistan to foster violence and mayhem in Jammu and Kashmir and elsewhere in India will, in future, elicit an Indian response which will raise the national strategic costs for Pakistan in more ways than one.

We are now actively engaging our neighbours bilaterally, sub-regionally and regionally in the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) to promote a feeling of togetherness and mutual confidence, while enhancing co-operation. The Group of Eminent Persons set up by SAARC leaders has come out with a Vision Statement calling for the SAARC Region to become a Free Trade Area by 2010, a Customs Union by 2015 and an Economic Community by 2020. This is an attainable objective if all countries agree to unconditionally work towards its attainment. But, during negotiations for expanding the ambit of the South Asian Preferential Trade Agreement, it has become clear that all our neighbours except Pakistan have welcomed and constructively joined in these efforts to expand trade and economic co-operation. Pakistan alone would like to hold the expansion of economic co-operation in South Asia hostage to its goals on Kashmir. It is obvious that given Pakistan's approach we have little chance of achieving the goals outlined in the Vision Statement of SAARC. We will, therefore, have to concentrate our efforts in activating other sub-regional and regional groupings where enhanced co-operation will not become hostage to Pakistan's intransigence.

The recently concluded Free Trade Agreement with Sri Lanka has opened the doors for us to seek similar co-operative arrangements with other neighbours like Bangladesh and Myanmar. We already have such agreements with Bhutan and Nepal. In negotiating such agreements, we should be guided by a spirit of accommodation and not be influenced by imaginary or exaggerated fears of damage to our industries. The sub-regional Growth Quadrangle comprising India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh set up during the SAARC Council of Ministers meeting in 1996 is committed to expanding economic co-operation between member countries in areas like communications, trade, tourism, investment

promotion and optimum utilisation of natural resources. New Delhi will have to show a greater sense of dynamism in identifying projects that will benefit the entire eastern region of the subcontinent. Even more important is the emergence of Bangladesh-India-Myanmar-Sri Lanka-Thailand Economic Co-operation (BIMSTEC), an economic grouping linking the littoral states of the Bay of Bengal. This is an organisation bringing together three SAARC members with two ASEAN member States. We would need to develop this grouping as a bridge between South and South East Asia.

Pakistan's intransigence will have to be met by us with a bold thrust for Regional Economic Co-operation bringing together the States of South, South East, and Central Asia and the Indian Ocean Region in a co-operative endeavour for enhanced co-operation and understanding. As a member of the BIMSTEC, a full dialogue partner of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), a member of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), a founder member of the Indian Ocean Rim Association for Regional Co-operation and a participant in the CICA process initiated by Kazakhstan we are well placed to move purposefully in this direction. Despite differences with China, we have to take note of the immense potential of working together with the People's Republic not only bilaterally but also through forums like the Kunming Initiative and CICA towards the larger goal of developing a framework for peace and co-operation in Asia. While we should welcome any co-operation we receive from Pakistan in achieving these goals, it would be best to follow a policy of benign neglect towards Pakistan if it remains a hurdle in efforts towards expanding regional and sub-regional economic co-operation. Pakistan has to make up its mind on whether it would like to constructively participate in efforts to build bridges of economic co-operation in South Asia. It could perhaps serve as a bridge between South and South West Asia if it chooses to do so. The SAARC process will inevitably fade out if it pursues its present policies. India can then go ahead with renewed vigour in its regional engagement in other forums. Pakistan, in turn, would perhaps find itself happier in forums like the Economic Co-operation Organisation (ECO) and Organisation of Islamic Countries (OIC) where India is not a member.

Following the military takeover on 12 October 1999, a view has been articulated that we should avoid dealing with or granting legitimacy to the Musharraf dispensation. There have even been suggestions that General Musharraf is at heart a "Talibanised" person with fundamentalist instincts. It is true that with the end of the Cold War the international community views military takeovers with distaste. This is quite evident from the manner in which Pakistan has been suspended from the Councils of the Commonwealth and from the response of the European Union and others. But a policy of total disengagement with any neighbour with whom we share borders is neither realistic nor desirable. In dealing with the military dispensation, we will have to be guided by a policy marked by realism and a dispassionate appraisal of how our interests can be best served in dealing with a politically volatile and economically bankrupt neighbour, with whom we have a history of tense relations. It may also not be entirely correct to label the entire Pakistan military establishment as "fundamentalist", even though they do strongly believe in using appeals to Islam and "Jihad" to achieve their ends both domestically and in the conduct of foreign policy. Despite his repeated invocations of "Jihad," General Musharraf himself is modern minded and can be personally charming. He does believe, for example, that women in Pakistan deserve to be treated with dignity and would be ill at ease in justifying the Taliban's approach to women. But there is no doubt that he entertains deep prejudices when it comes to his views about India. This is evident from his constant reference to Indian "hegemony", Indian "insincerity" and his aversion to the Indian Ocean being so named.

Given General Musharraf's antipathy towards both Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto, he has inevitably been required to make compromises with the religious right wing parties like the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (Fazlul Rehman) [JUI (F)] and the Jamaat-i-Islami [JI]. This has involved appeasement of these parties on issues like the Blasphemy Law and the Islamic features of the Constitution. Externally, he has placed himself in a position where he has no option but to accommodate the Taliban in Afghanistan and constantly proclaim his support for "Jihad" in Kashmir. The nexus between the military-intelligence establishment and Islamic groups



within Pakistan is mutually reinforcing. Despite General Musharraf's protestations about his modern and moderate approach to issues, he cannot ignore the military establishment's links with the religious right. In these circumstances, the ruling establishment will not give up its support to groups like the *Laskhar-e-Toiba* or the *Harkat-ul-Mujahideen* – organisations that claim to champion "Jihadi" causes worldwide. Support for such groups will cease only when the military-intelligence establishment is compelled to recognise that the costs of such actions far exceed any benefits derived.

General Musharraf has never personally endorsed either the Lahore Process or the Simla Agreement. If anything he has only spoken disparagingly of both these documents signed at the highest level. While proclaiming understanding and support for "Jihad" in Jammu and Kashmir, he also stated shortly after the Lahore Summit that low-intensity conflict with India would continue even if the Kashmir issue were resolved. While claiming that Kashmir is the "core issue" bedeviling relations with India, Pakistan still questions the accession of Junagadh and Hyderabad to the Indian Union. In these circumstances, the question could logically be posed as to whether there is any merit at all in having a dialogue with Pakistan.

The last round of Foreign Secretary-level talks was really a dialogue of the deaf. Confronted with evidence about Pakistani support for terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the Pakistan Foreign Secretary Shamshad Ahmad told his Indian counterpart K Raghunath that he was not aware of the existence of an organisation called the *Lashkar-e-Toiba* in Pakistan. It is quite obvious that any official dialogue between Foreign Secretaries is going to reach the same dead end, as Pakistan still claims that it was not its Army but some mythical "Mujahideen" falling from the skies on the high slopes of the Himalays who effected the intrusion in Kargil. General Musharraf wants the dialogue to focus predominantly on Kashmir. He does not want progress in any other area of the relationship till the dialogue on Kashmir is "result oriented". There is, therefore, little point in the Foreign Secretaries meeting till there is much greater clarity on General Musharraf's commitment to the Simla Agreement and Lahore Declaration. We would also need to be reassured that even if there is no public commitment from the

Pakistan government, support to cross border terrorism has ceased. Pakistan will have to realise that complex issues like Kashmir can be addressed and resolved only in an atmosphere free of violence and in a framework of co-operation where there is a free movement of people, goods and services across established boundaries.

Despite the foregoing, there are a number of channels still open for informal discussion and soundings between the two Governments. It is imperative that communications between the Directors General of Military Operations be strengthened and diplomatic contacts actively pursued. Both countries had agreed to conclude a number of Confidence-Building Measures during the Lahore Summit. These included prior notification of missile tests, avoidance of incidents at sea, and better communications between military commanders. It would also be useful to establish direct communications between Air Force Operations Staffs in the two countries so that incidents like the 1999 shooting down of the "Atlantique" naval reconnaissance aircraft are avoided. The broad framework of these agreements could perhaps be discussed informally and their provisions observed even if formal signature would have to await the restoration of trust and an end to support for cross border terrorism.

Even though there is some skepticism about the utility of second track processes, there is merit in keeping an active second track dialogue going with Pakistan, though the publicity accompanying such efforts is best avoided. More importantly, it is necessary to avoid resort to rhetoric in dealing with Pakistan. Actions speak louder than words. We would also have to undertake a sustained programme for modernisation of the Armed Forces, so that the qualitative edge we enjoyed in the 1970s and the 1980s is restored. One of the underlying reasons for Pakistan's adventure in Kargil, like its folly in 1965, was the belief that we had indeed lost our qualitative edge. The 28 per cent increase in the Defence Budget this year should not be a one-time affair. Our Defence Budget was reduced to ridiculously low levels in the post-liberalisation era. It needs to be restored to a realistic and affordable level of 3 per cent of GDP in due course.

In dealing with Pakistan we sometimes tend to get paranoid when it comes to promoting people-to-people contacts. This is neither desirable nor necessary in a democratic and secular country, confident of its strength and comfortable in its diversity. Our regulations need to be far more liberal and simple so that visitors, be they peace activists, students, cultural troupes or pilgrims from Pakistan, are allowed to freely travel in India to meet their friends and counterparts. There are also provisions for promoting Group Tourism from Pakistan to India. We need to imaginatively implement these ideas. Finally, it is inevitable that the military establishment in Pakistan will continue to play a key role in the conduct of relations with India even if democracy in some form or the other is restored. We need to explore how military level contacts commencing with visits of retired military officials can be fostered.

In the ultimate analysis, Pakistan will realise that it cannot succeed in its efforts to "bleed" us out of Kashmir if we avoid giving them an opportunity to do so. The competitive rivalry in appealing to communal sentiments in the Punjab in the early 1980s, the perception of the elections in Jammu and Kashmir as being flawed and less than fair in 1987 and the communal passions flowing from the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992 were all exploited by Pakistan. One hopes that as our democracy matures with the passage of time, we will evolve a national political consensus on avoiding such situations. The best way to deal with Pakistan is to strengthen the democratic, diverse, secular and pluralistic polity of our country, even as we accelerate our levels of economic growth and prosperity.

## The Sri Lankan Imbroglio: Lessons for India

BRIG R S GREWAL

Sri Lanka, India's Southern neighbour, has variously been described as the Emerald Island, Pearl of the East or also as a tear falling off the Indian cheek. Ironically, the country has been the victim of ethnic strife for almost two decades now. It has resulted in retardation of its economic growth and has raised doubts about the standard of civil liberties and political rights enjoyed by its citizens. The ethnic conflict is no longer confined within its borders. The Tamil diaspora has been able to create a lobby for itself in the Western world. The recent spurt in fighting in the Jaffna peninsula has rekindled the debate in India over the options available to safeguard its national interests. The strategy worked out seems to be to ensure the territorial integrity of Sri Lanka, try and bring about a negotiated settlement between the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Colombo without getting militarily involved and to act as a mediator if both the parties to the conflict are willing to accept India in that role. The stimulus for the formulation of the above policy emanates from the lessons learnt in the aftermath of the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) experience. However, there are other important lessons that need to be imbibed from the Sri Lankan imbroglio and these fall within the ambit of running the affairs within the country.

The Sri Lankan experience provides some valuable lessons for multi-ethnic and multicultural societies. One factor that stands out clearly is that national interests and concerns in pluralistic societies can not be identified with traditional majority concerns and that these rise above those levels to accommodate the minority concerns as well. Any deviation from the path of peaceful co-existence can result in rigidity in posturing, which when driven by catalysts like quick global dissemination of news, exploitation of situation by various interest-groups, cross-border links between

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Brig R S Grewal is Chief Engineer, Project Udayak, in the Border Roads Organisation.

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ethnic groups, international concern for human rights and easy access to the illegal international arms market can result in a conflict with uncontrollable consequences. That is precisely what has happened in Sri Lanka. An essentially linguistic conflict fuelled by Buddhist fundamentalism has been confronted by Tamil fascism, plunging the country into an uncontrollable conflagration. There are lessons to be learnt from the developments that have brought the country to such a sorry state.

### **Rise of Buddhist Fundamentalism**

Religious fundamentalism is a shibboleth, which misleads an average human being. The Oxford Reference Dictionary explains 'Fundamentalism' as "strict maintenance of traditional orthodox religious beliefs; a religious movement which developed among various protestant bodies in the USA after the First World War, based on strict adherence to certain tenets held to be fundamental to Christian faith". Today all over the world, there are movements and organisations which are labelled as fundamentalist. They all apparently attach a central importance to scripture as an infallible and accessible guide to the conduct of human affairs. They argue for a return to the original formulations and meanings given to a religion at the time of foundation in its first texts.<sup>1</sup> However, there are some who feel that religious fundamentalism is a protean phenomenon which appears in different shades in society.<sup>2</sup> Depending upon its origin, the environment and its practice, it could be classified as literalist, theocratic or nationalist fundamentalism. Literalist fundamentalism could be correlated to the original signification of the term and identifies fundamentalism with literal rather than liberal interpretation of the religious scriptures. Christian fundamentalism, as it originated in 1920s in the USA is an example of literalist fundamentalism. Theocratic fundamentalism, on the other hand, insists on the fusion of church and state. Present-day Muslim fundamentalism falls in this category. Nationalist fundamentalism spans the aspirations to political power on the basis of religious identity. It generally holds that the religious and national identities are coterminous. Buddhist fundamentalism, as practised in Sri Lanka, falls in this category. The purpose of highlighting the different shades of fundamentalism was to bring home the point that though

it is difficult to believe that Buddhism could take this shape, the Buddhist clergy has hijacked religion to give it a destructively negative dimension. It would not be out of place to trace the origins of this malaise.

The seeds for Buddhist revivalism were laid in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century by European colonisers who were accompanied by missionaries mainly from Holland, Britain and the USA. Apart from proselytisation these missionaries laid stress on educating the masses by running good quality schools. However, there was a difference in the standards of education as imparted in the North and the South. The educational standards of the schools run by the government and the British and Dutch missionaries in the South were extremely poor.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, American missionaries in the North laid greater stress on education which, consequently, transformed into economic benefits. The intellectual capital so generated created material surplus for the Tamil peasantry, fisherfolk and its merchant class in Northern Sri Lanka. Moreover, the caste system prevalent amongst the Hindu Tamils offered greater opportunities for the missionaries in the North to proselytise. Thus, the focus of their attention was in the North. The proficiency in English and other sciences achieved by Northern Sri Lankans who were mainly Tamils helped them secure jobs easily with the colonial masters. This enhanced their status in society and brought them prosperity.

The differentials in educational and economic standards between Northern and Southern Sri Lanka prompted a national revival movement in the South. Anagarika Dharmapala and C W Kannangara started a campaign to launch educational reforms and highlighted the extent of economic and cultural deprivation amongst the Sinhala Buddhists.<sup>4</sup> Anagarika Dharmapala saw in Buddhism the only way to take on British imperialism and Christian proselytisation. He was against any form of obscurantism and believed in westernisation nurtured on a strong foundation of Buddhist values and traditions. He viewed Buddhism as the only route to a cultural renaissance as also to economic regeneration.<sup>5</sup> When Dharmapala died in April 1893, the mantle fell upon Walpola Rahula who also considered Buddhism as an instrument for social

emancipation and political change. Following in the footsteps of Dharmapala, he envisaged an aggressively active role for the monks to usher in changes by laying emphasis on active brotherhood. However, successive generations of politicians starting with S W R D Bandaranaike and the 'brotherhood' succumbed to the lure of wealth, power and status and subverted the ideals of Dharmapala and Walpola. Thus, economic Buddhism, cultural Buddhism and social Buddhism as conceived by the reformist duo became transformed into Political Buddhism.<sup>6</sup> This brand of Buddhist fundamentalism triggered horrific consequences in the multi-ethnic, and multi-religious Sri Lankan society.

Immediately after independence Sri Lanka desired to be a functional democracy that could foster a peace-loving multi-ethnic society. But the majoritarian impulses of Buddhist fundamentalists upset this balance. The oppression of the minority Tamils propelled the country into a situation that was inimical both to peace and the well-being of its economy. In fact the fundamentalists could gain an upper hand due to the immaturity of democratic institutions. The country was dominated by political parties that were run by elite families without a semblance of democracy within.<sup>7</sup> The elite ran these political parties on dictatorial lines and resorted to the use of violence to intimidate political opposition. These parties brazenly resorted to populist politics to serve their short-term interests. Leaders like S W R D Bandaranaike and Phillip Gunewardene roused the sentiments of the Sinhala constituency with promises of emancipation and economic developmental measures, which were considered by the Tamil minority to be against their interests. To start with, in 1956 Sinhala was declared as the sole official language. Instead of adopting positive measures for uplift of the backward Sinhala community, the approach was to deny opportunities to the Tamils. That was the beginning of the ethnic discord. Matters got aggravated further with policy changes enunciating that the selection of candidates for universities would be on the basis of proportional representation to give additional room for underprivileged provinces. Since the Sinhalese formed the majority in such provinces, the move *de facto* amounted to laying down higher standards for Tamils to secure admission to universities. Conferment of special protection for Buddhism further

confirmed the suspicions in Tamil minds. Thereafter, the Sri Lankan Government undertook certain irrigation development projects in the North-Central and Eastern parts of the country. The allotment of land in these areas to the underprivileged sections of society, who again happened to be mostly Sinhalese, was perceived by the Tamils as an attempt to alter the demographic pattern of the Tamil-majority areas. A point of no return was perhaps created by the police assault on the World Tamil Conference in Jaffna in 1973, where the perceived Tamil humiliation was complete. Sentiments were so intense that a united Tamil population ensured that the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) became the second largest party in Parliament on an election manifesto which aimed to establish an independent, sovereign, secular, socialist state of Tamil Eelam. Riots against the Tamils, mainly in Colombo and some urban areas in 1978 and 1983, further strengthened the Tamil resolute to demand an independent homeland.

The armed struggle started by various Tamil groups and the emergence of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) as a dominant force after a fratricidal war brought home the importance of peaceful governance supported by generosity and discarding the policies aimed at coercion of minorities in favour of those promoting reconciliation. It is not that no attempts were made earlier to settle the ethnic differences. Attempts made in 1957 and 1965 to resolve the ethnic dispute floundered in the absence of Sinhala consensus and Tamil non-co-operation. Similarly, President Jayawardene sabotaged a proposal worked out by G Parthasarathi in 1983. The same fate befell the Indo-Sri Lanka Accord of 1987. While one section of the Government, headed by President Jayawardene, supported the Accord, another wing led by Prime Minister Premadasa, in collusion with Buddhist monks, vehemently opposed it. Some of the Buddhist monks had threatened self-immolation if Indian Armed Forces entered the island republic.<sup>8</sup> Later reports indicated that Premadasa had supplied arms to the LTTE to fight the IPKF. The influence of religious leaders in shaping the destiny of the country can be gauged from the fact that no senior minister represented the Government during the peace talks in 1995. Instead it was represented by some religious leaders and academicians.<sup>9</sup>



Moreover, the media hype generated by various Sinhala parties to project their claims of being champions of the majority interests came in the way of a unified approach to solve the ethnic problem. Each party tried to derive maximum mileage from every situation. National interests were ignored in favour of vote politics and party interests. Even today Sinhala diehards oppose the devolution package proposed by the Government on the grounds that it would cause serious harm to the country, the Sinhalese race and the Buddhist way of life. Chauvinist Sinhalese have argued that substantial devolution would erode the authority of the central government. They are particularly incensed with the move of the People's Alliance (PA) Government to alter the unitary clause of the Constitution. Madeeche Pangnaseeha, head of the Amaparapura chapter of Buddhism, and Piyasena Dissanayake, leader of the National Joint Council representing various right-wing Sinhala organisations and Buddhist monks, have denounced the government's efforts to finalise the draft of a new constitution in consultation with the United National Party (UNP) as the "worst betrayal in country's history."<sup>10</sup>

Lack of unity on national issues among various political parties is not a peculiar phenomenon known only to Sri Lankan politics. The same malaise afflicts most developing countries. Unlike mature democracies, where political parties in opposition resort to constructive criticism of the ruling party's policies, opposition parties in emerging democracies try to live upto their name by opposing the government on every issue even at the cost of national interests.<sup>11</sup> Sri Lanka has been no exception. However, the development of a consensus between the government and the opposition on the issue of reconciliation is a welcome change.

### **The Tamil Response and Emergence of Fascism**

It would be prudent to dwell upon the phenomenon of fascism before tracing the course adopted by the Tamilian response. Encyclopaedia Britannica describes fascism as a political attitude and a mass movement that tended to dominate political life in Central, Southern and Eastern-Central Europe between 1919 and 1944. The Italian word *fascio* (derived from the Latin *fascis*, a

bundle of rods with an ax in it) symbolises both aspects; the power of many united and obeying one will and the authority of the state, which was the supreme source of law and order and all national life in Italy at that time. Even today unlimited state power concentrated in the hands of an individual or a clique and suppression of civil liberties constitute the pith and substance of fascism.<sup>12</sup> To believe, to obey, to combat, is fascism's antithesis to the democratic concepts of liberty, equality and fraternity. Fascism is exemplified by a definite attitude of mind that exalts the fighting spirit, military discipline, ruthlessness and action. It rejects all ethical motives as evils, which could weaken the resoluteness of will. It emphasises the Machiavellian concept which states that Christianity is "true"; but its stress on meekness and humility damages a political man by weakening and at the same time fanaticising him.

There are certain conditions for the emergence of fascist movements. First and foremost is national frustration coupled with deep emotions which ascribe internal shortcomings to enemy plots and domestic betrayers. National feelings of disappointment with an assumed need to close ranks in order to reach often fantastic goals could inspire a fascist movement. Further, poor socio-economic conditions and weakening of civilian democracy foster fascism. Illiteracy, unemployment and unbridgeable gaps between an underdeveloped and a developed society often provide the basis for growth of such movements. For example, the inflation related crisis of 1923, widespread unemployment of the 1930s and deep moral depression emanating from the defeat of 1918 provided the stimuli for fascism to prosper in Germany. Similarly, illiteracy of the peasant population, which lived in utmost destitution, low per capita national income and backwardness of political structure put an immense strain on all aspects of Italian society and life, which were exploited by Mussolini. However, there was a subtle difference in the concept of fascism as experienced in Italy and Germany. Though both brands of fascism demanded a charismatic leader, Mussolini saw the state as the source of all ethics and all individual life. He worked to make state and party become monolithic instruments in his own hands. He converted parliament into a party congress and practically fused legislative and executive power.

Hitler, on the other hand, emphasised the superiority and invulnerability of race. His invocation of Nordic Aryans as the only creative race on earth, the only source of human greatness and progress, was aimed at counteracting the disillusionment and inferiority complex of Germans who perceived themselves as surrounded by a hostile world. As a leader he demanded scrupulous adherence to race laws and ruthless resistance against the world poisoners, such as the Jews.

Like nationalism, socialism, and communism, fascism was a European movement, which has spread to other parts of the world and adapted itself to the social and political conditions of the host country. The Sri Lankan experience has been no exception.

Tamils in Sri Lanka have been described as a minority with a majority complex.<sup>13</sup> Barring the Indian Tamils in the plantation areas, the Tamil community has been the most progressive in the country. Due to their comparatively higher educational standards, the British had favoured Tamils for appointments in public service, political office and in British-owned business firms. The Sinhalese, however, attributed this to British antipathy towards them since they had rebelled repeatedly against imperial rule.<sup>14</sup> However, despite the dominance of the Tamil community in the political establishment and the bureaucracy, the vast majority amongst them were economically not more prosperous than their Sinhala brethren. In a market economy, surplus money, knowledge and skills relative to local needs flow to wherever money can be earned. Thus, well-educated offspring of the Tamil middle class from Northern Sri Lanka migrated to Colombo and other parts of the country. The peasantry and fisherfolk in the Northern peninsula, however, remained backward.<sup>15</sup> This socio-economic distortion in the lives of the Tamil people of the North and East was ignored by the national policy makers after independence while launching the "Sinhala Swabasha" movement. On the other hand, the "Tamil Swabasha" intelligentsia never received a comparable leadership. Upto 1956, the Tamil leadership, basically drawn from affluent members of the community in the South, had agitated for equality in power sharing between the Sinhala and Tamil communities. But the anti-Tamil racist ideology of the Sinhala chauvinists aimed at

elevating the status of the Sinhalese set the Tamil community on a confrontational course. The hardening of stands on both sides climaxed in the demand for a Tamil homeland, which the latter claimed has been traditionally theirs.

The concept of a Tamil homeland is also mired in controversy. The stand of the two contending antagonists, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, is based on interpretations of history by the scholars of their respective groups. The Tamils maintain that since medieval times they have been concentrated in areas that correspond to the Northern and Eastern provinces and in the Western littoral from the North upto Chillaw.<sup>16</sup> The concept of a Tamil homeland had started crystallising almost immediately after independence. It was formalised in 1951 with the inaugural convention of the Illankai Thamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK or the 'Federal Party') which resolved that "...the Tamil speaking people have an inalienable right to the territories which they have been traditionally occupying,... the ITAK condemns the deliberately planned policy of the government in colonising the land under the Gal-oya reservoir and other such areas with purely Sinhalese people as an infringement of their fundamental rights..."<sup>17</sup> The election manifesto of the TULF published during the 1977 General Elections stated that even before the Christian era, Tamil kings ruled the entire island of Ceylon. The basic thrust of the argument is that from ancient times the Tamils of Sri Lanka formed a distinct nation with its own specific territory and that the formation of the unitary nation state of Sri Lanka was a 19<sup>th</sup> Century phenomenon consequent to European colonisation of the island. The Sinhalese counter this argument by highlighting the continuity of their historiographic traditions which date back to over 2500 years and on the fact that remnants of their ancient civilisation are found in all parts of the island. They adduce evidence that till about the 13<sup>th</sup> Century Sinhalese rulers exercised sovereignty over the entire island and that, at most times, the North-Central part of the island, called Rajarata, was the heartland of the ancient Sinhalese civilisation. They maintain that for the Sinhalese in these areas the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was a period of continuing recession, caused by natural calamities and cultural assimilation by other ethnic groups.

It may thus be seen that the claims of the two antagonists are based on the way each interprets history, the pattern of political

control at a given point of time and the nature of demographic changes that have occurred over a period of time. The moot question is that how far back can one go in history? Sri Lankan politicians who plunged headlong into the sea of competitive and populist politics had no time to ponder over this. The media was too happy to be exploited by these politicians which helped in rousing the passions of a gullible populace. In this emotionally surcharged environment arrived Velupillai Pirabhakaran in the mid-1970s to lead the disillusioned Tamils which had a profound effect on the course of events in Sri Lanka.

A brief look into Pirabhakaran's background would facilitate in understanding the philosophy of the LTTE. Pirabhakaran spent his younger days in Velvettiturai, a coastal town in the Northern peninsula. Smuggling was a way of life there. This town provided a large volunteer force when the Island's Tamil politics got sucked into a web of violence and counter violence. It was here that Pirabhakaran built up an economic base for his Tamil militant organisation known as the Tamil New Tigers (TNT). He later founded the LTTE in 1975 and charted a constitution which all its members were expected to sign and accept. It called for the establishment of a casteless Tamil society through an armed struggle. Its members were warned against tainting their loyalty to the LTTE. Family ties and other emotional relationships had no place in it. Those who quit the group or formed new groups faced a death penalty. He believed that the sprouting of a large number of groups with the same mission would not only divide the resources of the Tamil militants but also make them vulnerable to political manipulation by the Sri Lankan establishment resulting in their eventual decimation either militarily or for a price. He therefore ruthlessly eliminated all rival groups like the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), the Peoples Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE), and the Eelam Peoples Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) to make LTTE the dominant group. The constitution of the LTTE drafted by him has stood the test of time as well as the military and political power of the Sri Lankan Government. He has proved to be a most ruthless and determined man and has displayed tremendous foresight. He sought and received military and moral help from India.<sup>18</sup> However, at heart, he had realised that

eventually he will have to battle India; even more than Sri Lanka India will not allow the formation of Tamil Eelam because of its own 55 million Tamils. He used India to grow big.<sup>19</sup> Eventually, he was proved right. With his energy, commitment to the cause and military acumen, he has spawned a worldwide legion and has become bigger than the myth.

Today, the LTTE is committed to only one cause – Tamil Eelam. Unquestioned loyalty to Pirabhakaran is considered essential to achieve the goal. Pirabhakaran is opposed to multi-party democracy. To ensure that his views are not questioned by any democratic values, he ensures the absence of a second rung leadership in his organisation. He has been able to project himself a super-hero, the man of destiny, a demi god, who like other fascist leaders appears from nowhere to lead the chosen people.<sup>20</sup> He is remote and unchallenged. His every wish is law. He feels he has a right to kill anyone who questions his opinion because he is the deliverer.

Today the LTTE has grown into a fascist organisation. Though it tries to portray itself as a liberation movement, it has never presented a proposal for the constitution and government of Tamil Eelam. Its quest for state power, concentrated in the hands of a single leader, is fraught with risks of tyrannical leadership. Given its penchant for a terrorist ideology, the consequences for the country in general and Tamils in particular could be catastrophic because all such dictatorships start with spectacular successes but eventually bring untold misery and destruction to their people. Mercifully, not all Tamils are with Pirabhakaran.

### **Lessons for India**

The analogy of Sri Lanka, where Buddhist Fundamentalism was countered by Tamil Fascism plunging the country into a bloody civil war, may not be totally applicable to India. However, still there are lessons to be learnt. The malaise which affected Sri Lanka was given impetus by certain factors that exist in India which, if not checked, could manifest themselves in different forms to the detriment of the country's polity and well-being. It must be

remembered that the just war theology of the past is irrelevant today. The wars being fought today are shot through with evil, falsity and sin. The internal dissensions created by various agencies as well as our political leaders represent a war of a different kind. It is the duty of every citizen to work for the eradication of maladies that could bring the country to court misfortune.

In India almost all political parties, constrained by considerations of electoral competition, have displayed a weak-kneed approach to the problem of religious fundamentalism. Consequently, fundamentalists of almost all hues are encountered in the country. There are literalist fundamentalists who maintain that the texts of their respective scriptures have to be literally understood, applied and implemented. They regard all efforts at interpreting, leave alone amending, the original texts in the light of modern social conditions and state of human knowledge as blasphemous. They are not concerned that their approach may bring about social stagnation and deprive society from savouring the fruits of progressive movements. On the other hand, some extremists of their ilk could promote religious fanaticism. Then there are the theocratic fundamentalists who insist on the fusion of religion and state. They like the state to be run as per religious tenets. More often than not, they confuse religion with symbolism and dogmatism. They belong to those segments of society who perceive that their spiritual and physical well-being and their future development can not be achieved through reason in politics. Massive frustrations of hopes and aspirations drive them into the folds of fundamentalism. The nationalist fundamentalists, on the other hand, aspire to political power on the basis of national identity, on the grounds that religious and national identities are closely linked. In their quest for power, they stoke the feelings of antagonism between the majority and minority communities.

The problem in India is that religion is increasingly coming to be used as a weapon of offence and defence in the struggle for spoils amongst our politicians. This metamorphosis in Indian politics can be traced to 1979 when for the first time in the history of the country a democratically elected government had to bow out of office on a communal issue and its successor had no qualms in



relying on communal-vote-politics to retain its hold on power. Thus, today the majority community has started feeling that their spirit of accommodation and tolerance was being misused by minorities. To the minorities, the majority of a particular community automatically means a majority in the polity. The fact that the majority community is broken into cross-cutting political allegiances and alliances does not make much sense to them. This psyche of the masses is exploited by politicians to further pursue religious fundamentalism more vigorously for the furtherance of their nefarious designs.

In India, where a vast majority of the population lives in conditions of utmost destitution and illiteracy, authoritarianism and fascism fused in a peculiar way, rather than its original variety, have emerged to preside over the destiny of the country. The Indian middle class, instead of standing up to the onslaught of over-zealous politicians, has either capitulated meekly and remained silent or, in some rare cases, has even joined them momentarily. Some may argue that democracy has come to stay in India and that except for a brief period of 'Emergency' from 1975 to 1977 there is no emphasis on sovereign-state power, which is the main philosophical basis of fascism. However, in the wake of rampant poverty, the weaknesses of liberal Indian tradition have been revealed and different versions of fascism adapting to our peculiar national and social conditions have appeared.

Firstly, we have a brand of fascism that is based on race or nation. There are political parties and groups who subscribe to this philosophy. Their defining element is hatred. They rely on rituals, ceremonies, festivals and history to remind people of their distinct national identity, increase their pride and esteem and conjure up before their eyes a vision of their own majesty and importance. In short, they arouse a heightened religiosity tinged with a crusade against evil. Their fascism is aimed at establishing their claim to be truly and uniquely 'national' by a 'democratic' argument: majority interests should always prevail in India.<sup>21</sup>

In direct contrast to the above model is the fascism adopted by another political party which relies on the charisma of its leader



and that leader invariably has to be from a particular family. This model of fascism is akin to that propagated by Mussolini. The ruling philosophy of this model is that the role of the leader is to make the strong prevail over the weak. The state and party are considered monolithic and, thus, organisational elections are dispensed with. National destiny is to be fulfilled by observing the duty to the 'leader' and thus attaining the highest pinnacle of morality. The leader fixes the standards of justice and injustice, of right and wrong. To woo the poor and illiterate masses all inhibitions and pretence of secularism are shunned. The leader is deified at the cost of national interests.

Those who have distorted democracy and induced fascist tendencies in Indian polity have done so by manipulating the media. The role of the media in corrupting national ethics and values has been rather intriguing. The media, including the premier newspapers of the country as much as the regional language newspapers and the government controlled electronic media, has failed to acquit itself with any degree of credibility. It has played a significant role in the process of lowering of national values through a systematic legitimisation of divisive politics. In recent years, the media has shown scant respect for ethics in the way it gets news, covers news, blanks out news, gives disproportionate importance to certain events only because it matters to certain interest groups, and worse, is often a participant and not merely a dispassionate spectator on the scene.

The decline in the moral standards of political leaders in the last two decades has had its effect on the ethos of the Indian middle class. It has started believing that as long as the desired goals are achieved the method adopted is acceptable. There is a conscious devaluation of the role of ethics and idealism as an aspect of public life. Realpolitik has become the order of the day. Glorification of power is considered an absolute end in itself. Retention and consolidation of power even by unethical means is considered sanctified. The need for a society to have a commitment to some kind of ideological binding to a set of ethics and beliefs which could inspire rectitude and socially appropriate action has vanished. The propensity of the Indian middle class to abjectly

capitulate before a paramount leader has been laid bare.<sup>22</sup> This new ideology that has taken roots in India has forced the saner elements to retreat from the arena and self-serving politicians and criminals have taken over.

Sri Lanka is suffering because fascists and fundamentalists in the garb of national leaders have usurped power and have injected hatred and suspicion between different ethnic groups. Indian politicians are no different. Perhaps, they have imparted a lesson or two to their Sri Lankan counterparts. Apart from religious fundamentalism, they have also perfected the art of casteist fundamentalism. In fact, Sri Lanka borrowed the concept of the politics of job reservations from India.

Historically, India has been a multi-lingual, multi-religious, multi-ethnic and a multi-cultural union. The tendency of Indian civilisation has been one of accretion, leading to the accumulation of new elements without the elimination of old ones. The emergence of competitive populism in Indian polity poses a serious danger to our national ethics generating ethnic tensions. Those adopting a chauvinistic attitude towards language, religion and ethnicity pose serious problems to good governance and endanger secularism and democracy. These demagogues encourage linguistic, ethnic and religious chauvinism to their own advantage.

Today, one is reminded of Mahatma Gandhi who believed that politics should be guided by a thoroughly religious interpretation of reality, of life and of man's place in this world, in the sense that politics should be informed by principles of religious and philosophical wisdom. While following his teaching, one must not forget the difference between religion and ritualism or symbolism. Gandhi made unconditional devotion to the truth the mainspring of his social action. Paradoxically, it was his religious conviction that made him a great politician rather than a mere tactician or operator. In India it is difficult to disentangle the religious from the non-religious practice.<sup>23</sup> But the concept of secularism, advocating separation of church and state, has been borrowed in India from Europe. None of the religious denominations in India have a church standing above the state. Thus, the European model is not relevant

to India. Moreover, as maintained by Gandhi, no religion preaches hatred or prejudice. The function of religion is to keep a man on the right course, to fuel his optimism, to enhance his faith in the victory of hope over fear. By shunning the Gandhian version of secularism, the Indian State has come under tremendous strain leaving considerable scope for religious fundamentalists to exploit.

### **A Corrective Approach**

A disturbing feature of the Indian middle class has been its withdrawal from the democratic arena. Though it endorses democracy and recognises its merits, it happily accepts an authoritarian regime if it perceives the latter to be more conducive to its interests. There is a need to bring about an attitudinal change in Indian society to work for human fellowship. To achieve this common good in society, there is a requirement of both devolution of authority and power downward as well as assumption of responsibility for coordination and communication upwards. Moulding of attitudes to bring about a spirit of enquiry and the ability to absorb social criticism of one's own ethno-religious beliefs for the common good would go a long way in bringing about social harmony. It is true that a qualitative change in the established patterns of societal thinking and behaviour will not be easy to bring about. It will have to be started by an individual or a group of like-minded individuals as a movement. The sense of religious prejudice, which has pervaded the Indian society and is dominated by dogmatism, rituals, ceremonies and prescribed acts, would have to be replaced by making people understand religion in the correct perspective. Indian society has to become as egalitarian as possible, affording freedom of conscience equally to all without presumption of superior wisdom by any religious group. The intellectual level and quality of the clergy or the religious preachers will have to be improved to achieve this goal.

Economically weaker sections of society are more vulnerable to exploitation by religious fundamentalists and those propagating fascist ideologies. The goal of the government should be to promote an equitable socio-economic order. That would require the government to be fully transparent and accountable to people. At

present, in the interface between the public and the government, the latter is found to be unresponsive, inefficient, unconcerned, unsympathetic and often callous. The situation demands a change for it to function in a more missionary-like, egalitarian and energised manner. It is also necessary for the middle class to overcome the 'democracy fatigue' that has set in. This awakening can be brought about by good education, which is not to be confused with expensive education. Help could be sought from the NGOs in this direction, especially in the fields of eradication of illiteracy amongst women.

### Epilogue

For a country of continental dimensions that came out of centuries of feudal order and colonial rule only about five decades ago, India has done remarkably well in sticking to the democratic path. However, beneath the trappings of democratic structure, its institutions have been subjected to such assaults that they are in danger of crumbling. The degeneration of the national polity has assumed alarming proportions. There are lessons to be learnt from the Sri Lankan experience to ensure that the malady does not damage the fabric of national security.

### Notes

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<sup>3</sup> Gunadasa Amarasekera, "The Tamil Problem," URL : [http : // members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm](http://members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm).

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Jairam Ramesh, "The Killing of Budha," *India Today*, 26 June 2000, p. 39.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Abhaya, February 1998, "The Legitimate Grievances of the Tamil People," URL : <http://members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm>.

<sup>8</sup> "Colombo's SOS," *Indian Express* (New Delhi), 8 June 2000.

<sup>9</sup> Hanry Amarasooriya Wagage, "Facts on Excuses of LTTE Terrorists," URL : <http://members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> PTI, "Budhists in Sri Lanka Raise War Cry Against new Constitution," *The Sentinel* (Guwahati), 30 June 2000.

<sup>11</sup> Hanry Amarasooriya Wagage, op. cit.

<sup>12</sup> Shankar Saran, "Trivializing Fascism," *The Sentinel* (Guwahati), 26 June 2000.

<sup>13</sup> Abhaya, March 1998; URL : <http://members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Gunadasa Amarasekara, op. cit.

<sup>16</sup> G H Peiris, "An Appraisal of the Concept of a Traditional Homeland in Sri Lanka," URL : <http://members.tripod.com/~FOSUS/fridx.htm>.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Praful Bidwai, "Engaging with Sri Lanka," *Times of India* (New Delhi), 16 June 2000.

<sup>19</sup> Anita Pratap, "The Best Guerilla of All," *Outlook*, June 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Abhaya, February 1998, op. cit.

<sup>21</sup> D Raja, "Should We Debate Conversions,?" *Economic Times* (New Delhi), 19 January 1999.

<sup>22</sup> P K, Varma *The Great Indian Middle Class* (Penguin India, New Delhi, 1998), p. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Rajeev Bhargawa, "The Secular Imperative," *India International Centre Quarterly*, Vol 22, No 1, Spring 1995, p. 5.

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## Commemoration of 50th Anniversary of Korean War

MAJ GEN H B SINGH, PVSM (RETD)

The Koreans had a great ancient civilisation and were very progressive in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. After that until the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Korea was under the influence of China both politically and culturally. In 1895, Japan eliminated the Chinese influence by force and annexed the peninsula in 1910.

In 1943, the US, China and the UK jointly declared Korea to be free and independent to which Russia also agreed at Potsdam in 1945. It was decided that the Soviet Union and the United States will accept the Japanese surrender North and South of the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel, respectively. This decision was found unsatisfactory and so in 1945, the Soviet Union, the USA and Britain agreed to set up a temporary Democratic Korean Government for the whole of Korea. But due to lack of agreement between Russia and the USA, the matter was referred to the UN General Assembly which recommended elections in 1948 to choose a national Government in Korea. Occupation troops of the Soviet Union and the USA were to be withdrawn. A commission was appointed, headed by Mr KPS Menon, the then Indian Foreign Secretary, to oversee the arrangements. Russian members refused to vote on the commission and refused it entry into North Korea, thus confining it only to South Korea. Then it was decided to establish the Republic of Korea South of 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and Dr Syngman Rhee was chosen as President. Russians went ahead with elections in North Korea in 1948 and claimed authority over the whole Korean Peninsula. Thus, the division of the Korean Peninsula came into existence. After this Soviet forces were withdrawn from North Korea in 1948 and the US troops withdrew from South Korea in 1949.

### Korean War

The Korean War broke out on 25 June 1950 when North Korean troops crossed the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and attacked South Korea and by 28 June 1950 captured Seoul. The UN Commission on Korea

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Maj Gen H B Singh, PVSM (Retd) is the President of the Korean War Veterans Association of India.

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issued an official statement on 25 June 1950 calling for a cease-fire. The UN Security Council passed a resolution on 26 June 1950 calling the aggressors to withdraw their troops to the 38<sup>th</sup> Parallel and appealed to all member states to render every assistance in execution of this resolution. Most nations including India supported this Security Council action in Korea. Ultimately 22 countries under UN Command formed the fighting forces under Gen MacArthur, the first commander of UN forces.

The Korean war lasted about three years in which there was a great loss of lives and extensive damage to the economy of Korea. We, the Korean War Veterans from India, have been very much a part of it ever since with active participation of Indian Para Field Ambulance with excellent record and "Meritorious Unit Citation" Award, the highest US decoration to a Unit, which enhanced the prestige of the Indian Army and the Indian nation. The peace keeping efforts of the Indian custodian forces and NNRC for implementing the UN Mandate in Korea is very well known and greatly appreciated worldwide.

### **Korean War Veterans Association of ROK**

After the end of the war in 1953, its Korean veterans wanted to commemorate the role and support provided by the soldiers of allied countries, so they formed Korean War Veterans Association of ROK. This Association started revisit programmes every year for allied Korean War veterans in grateful recognition of their service and to see for themselves the new Korea which has grown fast and earned an important place in the global economy.

The allied Korean War Veterans also formed their respective national Korean War Veterans Associations, which were affiliated to the International Federation of Korean War Veterans Association (IFKWVAs) with Headquarters in Seoul, for coordinating the activities of these associations. The main aim of IFKWVA was to maintain and develop comradeship, liaison, cultural and social ties between Korean War Veterans and welfare schemes to benefit Korean War Veterans, war widows and their dependants. This also would give an opportunity for annual reunion of members of associations.

### 50th Anniversary of Korean War Commemoration

The 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War is being commemorated this year. This will continue from 25 June 2000 to 27 July 2003, the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the signing of the Armistice Agreement ending the conflict. The commemoration events are being held in conjunction with domestic and foreign functions. They are meant to pay homage to the memory of those veterans who sacrificed their lives in the Korean War, to honour and express gratitude to allied foreign veterans for their friendly ties and to share special memories. The President of the Korean War Veterans Association of ROK thanked the allied Korean War veterans for sparing their precious time to revisit the Republic of Korea for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and stated that they were entitled to be called "Ambassadors of Peace". He said that the Korean people will cherish in their hearts the valuable contribution and endless support given to them. The Korean Government helped a lot for its success and in achieving a pleasant and memorable trip to Korea by the allied Korean War Veterans. This commemoration is also meant to induce patriotism among the post-war generation of Koreans. These commemorative programmes will also help to strengthen existing friendship amongst countries who fought for world peace and freedom for Korea.

The main commemoration ceremony was held on 25 June 2000 at the war memorial, where representatives of allied countries including India participated. About 10,500 people including Koreans, foreign war veterans, their families, guests from allied nations, representatives from different departments and foreign diplomats participated. This ceremony consisted of traditional Korean music and dancing and performance by school children. Later, there was salutation to national flags, national anthem, dedicating roll of honour, silent prayer with gun volley for the dead. Apart from these were welcoming messages and an address by South Korea's Defence Minister. There was a commemorative address by distinguished guests. The whole ceremony was very impressive and memorable.

Other events were:-

- (a) General Assembly of IFKWVA.
- (b) Memorial service at National Cemetery.



- (c) Social for War veterans and their families, including honouring the war veterans in schools and cities.
- (d) Special exhibition for domestic and foreign tourists.
- (e) Korean War memorial to be developed and depiction of battle scenes of important battles and Korean war films.

### **Unification of Korea**

There has been a historic summit at Pyongyang between the Presidents of South and North Korea on 15 June 2000 in which they signed the first ever historic joint declaration for peace and unification of the Korean Peninsula. This was only possible with the support of allied countries and the great leadership of President Kim Dae Jung. This will reunite thousands of Korean families who were separated by the Korean War and ultimately lead to prosperity of the Korean people.

We the Korean War Veterans from India sincerely wish unification of Korea for prosperity and betterment of people of Korea in the new millennium.

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## Unification of the Koreaes

BRIG CHANDRA B KHANDURI (RETD)

**T**he signing of the historic agreement on 15 June 2000 at Pyongyang by the South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung and the North Korean President Kim Jong-Il has done to the cause of the reunification of Koreaes more than the storming of the Berlin Wall by the Germans in 1991. For half a century the four km deep Demilitarised Zone (DMZ) astride the 242 km 38<sup>th</sup> parallel that divides the Koreaes since the signing of the Armistice in 1953, the two countries have seen some of the worst tensions in their history. Often it has been a slanging match in verbal propaganda.

In June 1950 as hostilities broke out, the UN established a Commission on Koreaes for 're-establishing the national independence of Koreaes and the withdrawal of the occupying forces'. In 1953 it was replaced by the UN Commission for Reunification and Rehabilitation of Korea. This curious set-up became a victim of the Cold War and achieved nothing and was wound up by 1972 when both Koreaes agreed to explore the issue bilaterally. More developments took place as both the Koreaes which had only 'observer status' were made full members of the General Assembly in 1991. This was followed by their signing of an agreement on 'Reconciliation, Non-Aggression, Co-operation and Exchanges'.

The story of the Korean effort to reconcile after 1991 has been one of deep distrust bordering on open hostility as also of melodrama. US President Bill Clinton threatened North Korea with 'returning it to the stone age' and the State Department branded it as one of the 'rogue states' with a 'recluse' head of state. In addition, the Americans insisted on their presence in South Korea through the Combined Forces Command (CFC) or UN Command.

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Brig Chandra B Khanduri is well known for his interest in Military History. He has written a number of articles on defence matters.

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North Korea also had its share of keeping the pot boiling. Having signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty in 1992 it back-tracked from honouring the commitments. Fuel to fire was added when it sold M-10 missiles to Pakistan, Iran and Libya. The US retaliated by deploying the Patriot Defence System in the South. But brokering by the former President Jimmy Carter improved the prospects of dialogue for reconciliation. Kim Il-Sung, the father of Kim Jong-Il continued to outwardly appeal to the South to hold the 'Summit', declaring that he, in reciprocation, would not only freeze his nuclear programme but also cut his military to 100,000. A similar gesture had also been made by the South as its President often said that he was prepared for the 'summit', since it would change history'.

There were other players who had roles to play in this drama. China, Russia and even Japan. China openly supported North Korea especially in its days of economic difficulties in the mid-1990's. It also refused to support the US sponsored UN sanction against the North and publicly reiterated its relations with North Korea 'as close as lips and teeth'.

If the Chinese showed solidarity with the North, the Russians were not far back. From 1994, Boris Yeltsin spared no effort to champion the Korean cause. So much so he demanded a new security system in the world where the one-up-manship of the USA could be contained and neutralised. Vladimir Putin, the Russian President made a 'quiet' visit to Pyongyang in the first week of June 2000. The Japanese, nonetheless, were exacerbating their own fears of the North Korean intransigence owing to its missile tests in the Sea of Japan.

Another signal factor in covertly supporting the Korean reconciliation has been the American acceptance of what observers call 'the new Asian reality'. By 1997, the US was acknowledging the importance of a prosperous and self-reliant Asia. Accordingly, the US was mellowing down its attitude towards China, North Korea and its old enemy Vietnam. Of utmost significance was renewal of

the 'Most Favoured Nation Status' to China, despite the Chinese rebuff of the so called 'human rights violations in Tibet, Xinjiang and elsewhere in China'. Acknowledging the Chinese part in maintaining the essential Asian equilibrium, the US was banking on its support to even compel North Korea to abandon its nuclear weapons programme and sign the NPT and CTBT. So a climate conducive to holding of the 'summit' for which both the Koreas had clamoured for the past 50 years, worked out in the new millennium.

It became evident from the fact that by 20 June 2000 the US Government ended its 50 year old sanctions on North Korea. In a dramatic overture it even played semantics. It coined a terminology to rename its so called 'rouge states' as 'states of concern!'

### **Achievements of the Pyongyang Agreement**

The Agreement has both short term gains and long term prospects of eventual reunification. It includes resolving of the humanitarian issues, such as exchange of refugees and the POWs of the Korean War, cultural exchanges, inter-border movement of separated families and exchange of educational and technical know-how, besides plans for development of North Korea.

The Agreement also states specifically that there was a 'common element in South's concept of Confederation and North's formula for a loose form of Federation'. Thoughtfully, the Agreement refrained from introducing the contentious issues of the US Military presence in the South and the nuclear programme of the North. Final reunification would indeed find a solution to them.

### **The Final Objective and a Probable Timeframe**

The long term solution to Korean reunification has been complicated by both history and the two differing systems of governance. Over the years, the two halves have 'balkanised' into two seemingly irreconcilable systems. Their vignettes :

	NORTH KOREA	SOUTH KOREA
● Population	22,000,000 (appx)	44,000,000 (appx)
● Religions	Confucianism, Buddhism (But religious activities are non-existent)	Confucianism, Buddhism, and Christianity.
● Languages	Korean	Korean and English
● Government	Communism, One man rule, autocracy	Republic, strong Presidency.
● GNP	\$ 38 b. \$ 1,390 per capita Poor balance of trade	\$ 250 b. \$ 6,000 per capita Good balance of trade
● Defence	1.1 Millions all ranks Defence budget 6%	800,000 all ranks Defence budget 4.5 % + 37, 000 US Troops. Modern in comparison with North.

Undoubtedly, there exist the advantages of one language beside religious faith in latent form in the North which is practiced in full in the south. Then there are wide economic and trade differences in addition to the values. But if events of June 2000 are an indication of change, then change in every sphere of a United Korea is possible.

Inevitably, the real blocks to progress towards reunification limit to three factors: the ideological barrier; the nuances and interpretation of 'Confederation' and 'Federation' and finally, the role the US would want to play in a unified Korea.

In the matter of ideological differences, it is Kim Jong-II who would take longer than expected to mellow down. He will be vulnerable during the period of transformation from his own diehard Communists, especially the military. Transformation of autocracy to democracy is often a long process, but given a suitable climate it could be swift as happened in Russia and East Germany.

The issue that would, in fact, need careful resolution is of an even Confederation which will signify a union of Koreas where power

sharing will be the central issue. Both the states will have to surrender their individual sovereignty to a designated central authority. But how much of residuary power each will retain would assume importance. Any ticklish issue might retard the final solution for years.

A unified Korea is strategically beneficial to the US not only for trade but for containing China and improving detente with it. The US is, therefore, expected to insist on participation in the process. It might accelerate the reunification too.

It needs to be noted with great satisfaction that irrespective of the time frame for reunification, the first milestone has been crossed. And with the enthusiasm evident now, it would be a safe conjecture that concrete progress should be there by 2010 — thus paving the way for the final reunification in the next decade or so.

### **Post Script**

By July 2000 the news came of both the Governments having progressed further in their march towards reconciliation and unification. A Hot Line was established between the Army Headquarters of the two sides; a Liaison Office was established at the DMZ to facilitate crossing of the border by citizens. All these portend a keen desire among the two Governments to progress.

The largest gain for North Korea also occurred: with incredible speed, the USA removed its trade and other sanctions, and it was admitted as the new member of the Association of the South East Asian Nations — ASEAN, thus virtually ending the 50-year long isolation.

## China in Asia : A Case of Distorted Concept of Balance of Power

VALÉRIE NIQUET

On the first of October 1999 a military parade had been organised on Tiananmen Square (Square of Heavenly Peace) to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the People's Republic of China. The parade was huge and impressive. Among novelties, the DF 31 intercontinental ballistic missile to be equipped with multiple re-entry warheads was on display. DF 21 with a shorter range, as well as short range M9 and M11 missiles were also displayed. There was a great show of effectiveness of the Army, with new units of the marines corps and military police.

This was not just a parade; it had a very important strategic military objective for China. In its apparent awesomeness it had to create the image of a very efficient military force, which is far from the case today. It also had to project the image of a strong soldier, which goes contrary to the traditionally very poor image of the soldier in China: mercenary, not well paid, corrupt, with no sense of the State and the common good. This parade was aimed at two kinds of audiences inside and outside of China. But to these two audiences the message was the same: to show the ability of the Military to *control*. Not to protect or defend the territory but to maintain control.

This concept of control, which corresponds to the perceived centrality and universality of the Chinese Empire, is very important to fully understand Chinese strategic objectives and position in Asia. In this context, it is obvious that the concept of balance of power can only be distorted and that another model of true multipolarity, based on co-operation and positive interaction among equal powers, is very far from the minds of Chinese leaders.

Control is established with a continuity in concentric circles. Zhongnanhai is the inner political circle of control. This core expands to a larger circle of social control of the population, which is very important in these difficult times of economic reforms and unemployment leading to dire social and political circumstances. The

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Valérie Niquet is Director of Research of IRIS, the French Institute for International Relations and Strategic Studies, in Paris.

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second circle is the control circle at the margin of the Empire (Tibet, Xinjiang, Taiwan), along what one could call fuzzy borders. Traditionally, the notion of border could not exist for an Empire that was not only at the centre of the world but actually perceived itself as the world. This circle of control overlaps the third circle, which is the control circle of the whole of Asia. The concept of a balance of power in Asia is completely foreign to the Chinese leadership. On the contrary, China would like to believe that in Asia it has no real competitor and one of its main strategic objectives is to keep things that way.

Outside its sphere of influence, some Chinese strategists analyse the world system as a new Warring States (VIII Century BC) situation characterised by a high level of fluidity. In order to assert its position as a great power in this system, China has to be able to take advantage of all the resources of the triangular game between Moscow, Washington and the EU carefully in order not to give too much importance to a rival, India. To divide the enemy is a universal strategic principle which is expressed in the old Chinese maxim: "to use a barbarian to control a barbarian". But one must also notice that in ancient Chinese military writings like that of Sun Zi, stress is put on the concept of control, on the necessity to manipulate and never be manipulated.

So the main objective of the Chinese leadership is to establish its right to control and influence and to be able to see this right recognised by all major powers in the world. This objective can take many shapes and includes, for instance, the Taiwan question. Taiwan today is considered as a test case by the Chinese leadership of its ability to impose its own interpretation without any challenge.

China uses certain means to achieve this broad objective. First, there are the military means. China has been able to take advantage of its economic growth for almost 20 years to start the needed modernisation of its armed forces with the help of Russia. It has bought Sukhoi 27, and Ilyushin 76, and plans to buy Sukhoi 30. China also bought two Sovremennyyi class frigates equipped with Sunburn missiles, and four Kilo class submarines. Through these acquisitions, China has increased the credibility of its proclaimed ambitions. It has also upped the stakes of a US military intervention in the Taiwan Straits.



The capabilities of the Chinese Army, Navy and Air Force are still very low, compared to that of the United States, Japan and Taiwan. The edge of the Chinese might resides in the development of its missile and nuclear forces, and the ambiguity of its nuclear strategy in spite of a seemingly clear doctrine. No political party in the United States can afford to ignore a veiled Chinese nuclear threat, even if the real intercontinental nuclear capability of China is very low. Outside prestige, the nuclear capability and the use of a veiled nuclear threat, is the best way for China to be able to exclude any challenge to its strategic objectives in the region.

Inside Asia, serious challenges come from India and Japan. Japan is still more of a potential threat for China than a real one. Against Japan, the Chinese can use a variety of tools, like pacifism of the Japanese population and the burden of guilt of the Japanese political leadership inherited from the past. However, this tool to keep Japan down does not seem to be as effective as it used to be. For instance, it is getting more and more difficult for China to build a consensus against Japan in Asia. Even the Japan-South Korean relations are getting better since Kim Dae-Jung came to power in 1998. ASEAN seems eager to promote an important role for Japan in the region in the economic and security fields. Contrary to Chinese hopes, Russia also appears to be favourably inclined for such an arrangement. A new consensus is building in Asia. There is this *cauchemardesque* vision in China of Japan as an economic and technological superpower let loose, able to rearm inclusive of nuclear capability in a matter of months. For many years, Beijing shared this view with the United States and China accepted the US-Japan security alliance, complete with US bases in Japan, because it was perceived as a way to keep Japan down and to deal only with one interlocutor: the US. Things have changed with the reaffirmation by the US administration and the Pentagon of the importance of the US-Japan security alliance as the core of stability in Asia. In 1996 new guidelines were adopted to deal with crises "around Japan" including or not the Taiwan Straits. The Theatre Missile Defence (TMD) project (or BMD as the Japanese prefer to say) is another strong irritant for China because it would reduce its margin for manoeuvre and its ability to achieve and keep China's supremacy unchallenged in Asia.

The contradiction between China's objective and the potential role of Japan in the region and the position of the rest of East Asia was evident during the summit on piracy organised in Tokyo on 28 April 2000. China was the only country in the region to oppose the project of a regional force with Japanese participation, designed to deal with security issues at sea like piracy or environmental problems. The sea lanes in the region are lifelines for Japan, in terms of commercial exchange and energy supply, and hence a vital security issue.

China would be very displeased with the participation of the Indian Navy in military exercises in the South China Sea; because the other main challenge to China's strategic objective in the region is India. India does not bend to China's pressures in contrast to its other neighbours. It is in this refusal to bend that lies for China the main threat: a threat to its symbolic authority. That is why the Indian nuclear tests were, and still are, so unacceptable to China. By taking the decision to test, India acted like the child who in the old tale said in the streets: "le Roi est nu!" (The Emperor has no clothes!) Because, like a king without clothes, the main power of China comes from its capacity to impress. That is why any challenge to this capacity is such a threat for the naked Chinese power.

Nuclear and missile capability constitutes the main attribute of China's power. At the social, political and economic levels, China is not so strong. The Army, Air Force and Navy are poor in spite of recent improvements. So it is vital for China to make the world believe in its power without allowing any challenge. A challenge to its ambition and position in the region poses a direct threat to its strategic objectives and to the survival of the regime and the leadership. The main ideological justification of the regime toward the population is of a strong nationalistic kind and based on the constant glorification of China as an ancient, cultural, economic, military and even demographic great power. But China actually is a very insecure power, which needs to remain the "dominant partner" in order to establish good relations with its neighbours.

China's power also lies in its capability to destabilise the world order. At the regional level, one can analyse the Sino-Pakistani relationship. Pakistan is China's tool to destabilise the situation in South Asia, in order to keep India down.

This is where lies the difficulty or the illusion of the integration of China with the international system at the regional or global level. China is simply not interested in an integration which supposes respect for at least some rules, and acceptance of the legitimate interests of others. China, for instance, is not at all in favour of preventive diplomacy for Asia. And when some concessions are needed it always prefers to stick to vague confidence building measures without any real commitment. China rejects any balance of power formula in Asia. Multipolarity for China is simply not a concept that can be accepted in Asia. In Asia, China rejects the emergence of new poles, like India, Japan or even ASEAN or the come back of old poles like Russia.

For China, multipolarity is a tool that can be used to counterbalance and reduce the margin of manoeuvre of the United States by manipulating other countries. The position of China today is not as favourable as it used to be two years ago. Inside China, the leadership faces many problems: Falungong protests, minority problems, people out of work, reduced economic growth, and a great inequality of development. The southern part of the country, big cities and coastal areas are prosperous. But in the North, North-East and the provinces of the interior, there is a Russia-like situation with salaries and pensions not paid and a collapse of all social security. In the countryside, where 70 per cent of the population still lives, the State apparatus is retreating, leaving behind only corrupt petty officials.

Ideologically, China is marginalised even in Asia where the democratisation process has been almost completed except in countries like Burma and North Korea, both supported by China. Diplomatically, China's position is not so good either, particularly since the successful visit of President Clinton to India. But the question remains as to what would an unbalanced teetering dragon do. This is the most important question for the future of Asia.

# Nationalism and National Security

LT GEN M L TULI, PVSM (RETD)

## Aggressive Spirit

The history of India is primarily a chequered account of invasions and the rise and fall of countless kingdoms and republics in which mostly the Indians were at the receiving end. In the international arena, the Indian gets appreciation as a 'Nice Guy' who is not aggressive about national interests, who yields territory instead of guarding or grabbing it, who doesn't give as good as he gets, who let others walk all over him, who because of all these factors gets left behind in the race.

Let us for example study the history of Delhi, the Capital of India, which is associated with nearly every era of the Indian past. The earliest mention of Delhi goes back to the Mahabharata, when it was founded by the Pandavs. Delhi had flourished during the Rajput, post-Gupta, Saka, Kushan and Sunga periods and there is evidence of Mauryan settlements (300 BC). Indraprastha was one of the five cities claimed by the Pandav Brothers. Sonapat, Panipat, Tilpat and Bagpat have survived, if only in name, as towns around Delhi. Delhi's prominence revived in the era of Bikranjit (AD 372) when Anangpal of Tomar tribe made Delhi its Capital. In AD 791, a hotly contested battle was fought between Prithviraj Tomar and Bildeva Chauhan and control was transferred to the latter tribe. The ancestors of Anangpal moved from Indraprastha to Anangpur, a little beyond Tughlaqabad. Some time later they moved again to Mehrauli when Anangpal II built Lalkot, Delhi's first fortress. The Chauhan dynasty defeated the Tomars in 1153 and his grandson Prithviraj III also known as Rai Pithora enlarged the boundaries of Lalkot and named it after himself – Qila Rai Pithora.

The tale of the first three Delhi's – Indraprastha, Anangpur and Lalkot – culminates at Mehrauli, when after destroying the Chauhan Citadel Delhi's Islamic Sultanate founded its capital. This hard won crown of Turkish endeavour boasted of impressive new palaces,

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Lt Gen M L Tuli, PVSM is former Vice Chief of the Army Staff.

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tanks, fortifications, the grandest mosque and a Victory Tower – the Qutab Minar. During the early years of the Sultanate, Lahore remained the capital until Iltutmish decided in favour of Delhi due to the growing presence of Mongols beyond the Indus who ransacked Lahore in 1241. In 1287 Balban's grandson Kaikabad founded the new city Kilokhiri on the banks of the Yamuna. Allauddin Khilji, faced with frequent Mongol invasions, began the fortification around the area called Siri. In 1320 Tughlaq founded Tughlaqabad. The third Tughlaq Sultan Firoz Shah was compelled by the perennial water shortage to build Firozabad on the banks of the Yamuna.

Timur destroyed this Sixth City of Delhi in 1398. The Mongols who had invaded Delhi *twelve times* since 1192 finally descended on the Lodis. Babur, a descendant of Timur and Chengiz Khan, defeated Ibrahim Lodi in 1526 to found the Mughal Empire. He resided in Agra but his son Humayun founded his own city Dinpanah on the site of Indraprastha. Sher Shah, the Afgan chieftain who wrested power from Humayun in 1540, founded his own city Shergarh over Dinpanah. The fort is generally called Purana Qila. Later Shahjahan built a new capital Shahjahanabad, the Seventh City of Delhi. It was looted and plundered by General Lake, though the British seat of power remained at Calcutta. The Marquess of Crew, Secretary of State for India, wrote, "The ancient walls of Delhi enshrine an imperial tradition comparable with that of Constantinople or Rome itself." His views were echoed by Lord Harding. Delhi, he said, "is a name to conjure with. It is intimately associated in the minds of Hindus it would be a source of unbounded gratification to see the ancient Capital of the Mughals restored." Thus developed Lutyens' Delhi around Raisina Hill from 1920 onwards.

Why and how this lack of aggressive spirit on the part of Indians? Since antiquity the central theme of Indian domestic and foreign policies has had a pronounced bias towards peace. This along with the teachings of Lord Buddha, which have exercised considerable influence on the Indian mind, has been misconstrued by some foreign powers and authors to suggest distaste for, and ineptness in, war. Further, India has been one of the few countries whose Armed Forces, save in a few isolated instances like the establishment of the Sri Vijaya Kingdom in South East Asia, Chola

victories in the same region, Hari Singh Nalwa and Zorawar Singh's forays touching Afghanistan and into Tibet, have not embarked on mighty campaigns of conquest abroad. One could perhaps mention Chandragupta Maurya, ably assisted by Chanakya his Prime Minister, as one of the great military leaders of ancient India who had expelled the Macedonian garrison from Punjab, Sindh, repulsed and humbled Selukas the Conqueror and established himself as supreme lord of the whole of North India and a large part of Ariana – Kabul, Herat, Kandahar and parts of Baluchistan. Unfortunately, even these few exploits are not very well documented. Thus the history of India is bereft of the romance and colour of wars of aggression and deeds of gallantry on foreign soil.

Adherence to fighting a defensive war, lack of determination and the inability to fight it out till the bitter end and take full advantage of a victory have been the bane of India in various fields of human endeavour. The ponderous war machinery of Indians with slow moving elephants was no match for the mobility and lightening attacks of Greeks, Central Asian Turks, Mongols, Mughals, who were all separated from their homes by long distances and committed to obtaining victories for their own enrichment. The aggressor fought with vigour and desperation. No such personal stake was involved for Indians. Political independence and nationalism meant little to the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Indians and we perhaps can project the same approach to the later period as well, with the exception of a few sagas of heroic resistance against the tyranny of Mughals and British Imperialism during the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Rana Sanga and Partap Singh of Mewar, Chatrapati Shivaji, Guru Gobind Singh, in the real sense of the term, brought a wonderful change in their own generations in the religious, military and political lives of the people. The legacy left behind by them was one of sacrifice, service, self-support and self-respect. Bhulle Shah, a celebrated Sufi Muslim of Punjab was a contemporary of Guru Gobind Singh. He pays a glowing tribute to the Guru, "I neither say of the past, nor do I speak of the future, but I talk of the time of Guru Gobind Singh and declare openly that but for him all the Hindus would have been converted to a foreign culture and religion". Again, it is part of post-Independence history that we failed to grasp the opportunities during the 1947-48 and 1965 Wars against Pakistan to relentlessly press

home the military advantage we had, to recover the territories that rightfully belong to us as sanctified by International Law and usage. Even during the 1971 Indo-Pak War, we missed a golden opportunity to make use of Pakistan territory and 90,000 prisoners of war of a demoralised nation and its Armed Forces as an effective bargaining counter to recover the areas grabbed by Pakistan.

Nations live or die by the way they respond to the particular challenges they face, both external and internal. There is no immutable law of nature that says only the unjust will be afflicted or that the just will prevail. While might certainly does not make right, neither does right by itself make might. The naive notion that we can preserve freedom by exuding goodwill is not only wrong, but dangerous. The more adherents it wins the more it tempts the aggressor. 'Kargils' have to be avoided at all costs. A comparatively weaker power and much smaller nation has measured its strength four times in less than 50 years, should this not make us sit up and think? Suppose we were to take over the whole or a part of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) to improve our situation at Siachen, Batalik, Kargil, Turtok sectors; would we be able to hold it and at what cost? I think we may have to face lesser situations than an all-out war. As for the nuclear threat, this is what Liddel Hart had written in 1950, "If both sides possess the same weapons there is a fair chance that both may hesitate to unloose it from mutual fear of the common consequences."

### **National Goals**

India has not achieved the greatness that is its due. It is necessary to raise the goals of national development to a new plane. Should we develop economic muscle or secure decisive military prowess? As Friedrich List, a leading Prussian political economist explained, "Power is of more importance than wealth... because the reverse of power – namely feebleness – leads to relinquishment of all that we possess, not acquired wealth alone, but our powers of production, of our civilisation, of our freedom, may be even of our national independence, into the hand of those who surpass us in might."

Perhaps history is in the process of repeating itself, for Indian ruling classes even in the past have been wedded to stagnant tranquility, continuous infighting to remain in power, only to be overwhelmed by the more dynamic and ruthless foreign adventurers. A softening process in the shape of low intensity war both on the Eastern and Western flanks of the country, secessionist movements, and terrorism are already creating dents in our political, social, economic and technological development and preventing us from attaining the full potential of progress for the benefit of the masses.

The need of the hour then is, should India be content within this restricted ambit and with its dubious distinction as a "Third World Super Power" or work single-mindedly towards attaining genuine great power status. A militarily muscular and self-confident India will at once be more outward looking and economically open and energetic. If proof were needed of the differential in treatment, compare Washington and the West's generally respectful approach to a nuclear weaponised China – USA extending the 'Most Favoured nation' status – and their fairly brusque and punitive attitude vis-à-vis India on almost any issue ranging from human rights to the deal with Russia for the cryogenic rocket engine and post-Pokhran II sanctions.

China was in no better shape than India, in fact it was far worse in the late 'forties'. But from the very start China, unlike India, was determined to be a power second to none. Refusing to play second fiddle to its revolutionary 'elder brother', it paid a heavy price in the disruption of its original pattern of economic development when the Soviet Union withdrew aid. Nor did China hesitate to ally with the hated USA in order to achieve its goal of climbing to the top of the big power league. For all its failures and faults, China is moving steadily in that direction.

### **Development of Nationalism**

In order to give the individual, particularly the younger generation, and the nation a sense of purpose, something to live for and if necessary to die for, we have to revive some philosophy of life and spiritual background to our thinking. It is widely admitted that the level of national character – discipline, honesty, integrity has



seriously declined and continues to do so. No Government by itself can effectively manage the affairs of modern society, nor can the police by themselves maintain law and order everywhere. Self-management by the citizens is a growing and inescapable reality. If youth in several parts of the country have begun to follow narrow or disruptive goals, the reason is the absence of inspiring and dynamic national objectives that would attract their energy, intelligence and moral commitment. Lack of opportunity and employment avenues further complicate the situation. Due emphasis therefore has to be given to the economic and social components of our effort. We have to remember that principles alone have no real force except when one is reasonably well-fed, educated and lives in a healthy environment. Eradication of caste, assimilation of underprivileged into the mainstream, removal of political feudalism and emancipation of women and conservation of natural resources as a habit can to a degree instill pride and enhance the national will power.

National will involves far more than readiness to use military power. It includes resources to maintain that power including sacrifices on all fronts. To pay the cost of defence, to incur risks, to incur the displeasure of powerful opinion at home and objections from abroad.

To sum up, Mackinder had observed, "There is no such thing as equality of opportunity for the nations and the rule of the world still rests upon force notwithstanding the judicial assumption of equality between sovereign states, whether great or small."

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## Letters to the Editor

*Letters are invited on subjects which have been dealt with in the Journal, or which are of general interest to the Services*

I

This refers to the letter written by Brigadier NB Grant, AVSM (Retd) in the March 2000 issue of the Journal.

The writer has very appropriately brought out the future role of technology specially the role of IT in shaping the battlefield. No wonder this leads to a feeling that military history need not be studied any more, for it is ancient and outdated. But the moot question still remains whether the use of technology means a change in the aim of the commanders in the field? For, at the subaltern's level or the company commander's level, what matters is the post which may be just 100 metres away, and the aim is to capture it. This is not being microscopic in thinking, for what matters ultimately is the physical annihilation of the enemy and own foothold on his territory.

The advances in computers, sensors, communications and the IT will only help in reducing the duration of conflict; the ground tactics will not change. It will only help in taking decisions correctly at the strategic level. Let us not forget what Einstein had said years ago that the fourth world war will be fought with stones. Stones or *Prithvi*, let us not deceive ourselves by taking shelter behind the computer or the IT, for if we neglect military history we only stand to lose.

General Patton may have used abnormal tactics in the Battle of Bulge but that does not mean his knowledge gained by study of military history was not put to use. It would be suicidal if the learnings from military history are put to application blindly. For military history not only teaches what is right but also what went wrong. It is known to all that 'Op Blue Star' 'Op Pawan' and 'Op Vijay' were not the conventional battles that history has earlier witnessed. But the future generations stand only to benefit from these. These operations were unique in all respects.

The US Pentagon must be planning for JOINT VISION 2010. Let us face the reality that they are far ahead of us in defence technology. Had technology been the winning factor the US would not like to forget Vietnam; Saddam Hussein would have been finished; and Osama Bin Laden would have been dead by now. On the contrary, every US citizen wants to forget the Vietnam War; Saddam Hussein is still in his seat; and Osama Bin Laden is still the most wanted terrorist in the world. The fact remains that any kind of technology can just be an aid and not the replacement to human courage and his animal instinct – so very essential in the battlefield.

*Major Puneet Srivastava*

## II

Sir,

This is in reference to the article titled "Understanding Infantry" by Lt Gen HB Kala, PVSM, AVSM, SC, GOC-in-C ARTRAC published in the April-June 2000 issue of the *USI Journal*. A lucid exposition on an important subject, coming from an eminent and battle experienced Infantry commander, is a welcome change.

An infantryman fights for the 'Izzat' of his battalion. His own safety is secondary. His personal elan and saga of bravery are unique. The legendary ordeals of "last man last round" and the "bayonet charge in the final 200 yards to the objective" epitomize his sense of supreme sacrifice. The characteristics and the reminder that it is men whose lives must be treated with respect, form the hallmark of this article.

The author has coined a new and simple phrase for employment of Infantry: "Less you lose, more you use." It is worth inclusion into our manuals. Semantics apart, in battle it is the correct employment of Infantry, which is vital. Otherwise, everything goes haywire. Infantry will, therefore, continue to hold the key to success in future land battles in our context.

Nonetheless, there is a flip side to it. This merits consideration and indeed, serious concern. Infantry today is not the most popular arm. Nor is it the best equipped. These days it is rare to find a third or even a second generation officer in a unit. What has caused this slide-down in the Infantry from its old pride of place? What should be done to once again make it the most prestigious and sought-after arm? There is an urgent need to resharpen this battle-winning sword arm of our Army.

*Brigadier Govind Singh Khimta (Retd)*

## A Soldier's Diary\*

LT GEN R N MAHAJAN, PVSM, VSM (RETD)\*\*

There is near irresistible urge amongst senior retired officers to write about their lives and times. The reasons for this are as numerous as they are diverse. This autobiography by Maj Gen Kuldip Singh Bajwa sets out to bridge the "gulf of ignorance" that isolates the soldier from the society and explains the "inner core of soldiering". Many have written about the events of that period, so what is new about this author and his Soldier's Diary? More than 250 pages of the Book are about the author – his life, environment, experiences and opinions. The mystery of the Falcon in the title of the Book is arresting.

The author gives a captivating account of his ancestry. His forebears rose to prominence in the period when Sikh power in Punjab was declining and British power ascending. They seized the opportunity, lustily soldiered for the British, won honours and set up a feudal clan. The clan's story up to the Partition is a curious amalgam of family pride, cohesion and intrigue. The author grew up in an atmosphere of "assertive self-assurance", Punjabi sense of superiority" and love of the outdoors - "the horse, the gun and the dog". He joined the Army in 1946, not for any particular love of soldiering but "largely because there were no other career openings, and soldiering was a time honoured family tradition". The book principally is the author's journey through thirty-two years down "the olive-green avenue."

Though he rose to be a Major General, the author did not achieve what is now known as "the ideal career profile" especially as a staff officer. Commissioned into the Corps of Engineers, after a while, he opted for the Armoured Corps but was transferred to the Jat Regiment. Three years on, he sought another change – this time to the Regiment of Artillery. His service with the Artillery was varied, rich and fruitful. His quick post-1962 postings signified the turbulence of rapid expansion particularly of light and mountain artillery capable of deployment against the Chinese. It was his signal honour to raise a regiment - proudly he terms it "A New Military Legend" - and lead it in action in Ladakh during the prelude to the 1965 War. His descriptions of the assault on the awesome Point 13620 overlooking Kargil and the events following its capture by Indian troops are most absorbing.

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\*The Falcon in My Name : A Soldier's Diary. By Maj General K S Bajwa (Delhi : South Asia Publications, 2000), pp.402, Rs. 495.00, ISBN B1-7433-022-4.

\*\*Lt Gen R N Mahajan is the former Deputy Chief of the Army Staff. He is the author of the book **A Career in the Armed Forces : How to Make it More Attractive**. *Journal of the United Service Institution of India*, Vol. CXXXI, No. 541, July-September 2000

The author commanded two elite infantry formations - 54 Infantry Brigade at Amritsar, right in the show window on the Indo-Pak border and 54 Infantry Division, then an Army Headquarters reserve formation at Secunderabad.

A doer and a go-getter; an improviser, an innovator; a showman, a commander who would like to believe that he is charismatic; and an equestrian with plenty of horse-sense, he identifies closely with his subordinates, imbues them with confidence and injects fun and swagger in their lives. Contemptuous of his quirky and cautious superiors, who are guibblers, vindictive or sychophants, he cuts corners when his own or his troops' interests are threatened. He is drawn to and prospers under those who are large-hearted, social, brave and decisive. He fancies himself as a tactician and frets when his "new" concepts are not instantly accepted by what he perceives as the slow and stolid higher brass. He likes to be accepted; it is ironic, therefore, that he is eternally the convert and feels rejected by both the Infantry and the Artillery because he was a transferee into those Arms, not born into them. Throughout the narrative, what sets this book apart is the personality of its author, the enthusiasm he has for soldiering, and the urge to rise in his career but always on his own terms.

The author has his own peculiar lucid style of describing events in which he himself has participated. His narration of how he permeated confidence in a de-spirited outfit or raised a new regiment has many nuggets of wisdom for budding leaders. His depiction of actions in Ladakh in 1964-65 and in Shakargarh in 1971 is clear but the reader would have followed this better had he utilised sketch maps. However, no reader will remain unmoved by the Author's profile of and eulogy to a fallen hero – an Airborne Observation Post Pilot – in Shakargarh.

When the author launches himself into the abstract, he becomes ponderous. Like, when he writes: "The Indian resolves were twinged (:) with bewilderment" or "The voracious appetites of the Second World War had long outstripped the assiduously cultivated image of the sahib in India." There are many stretched sentences. Some paragraphs are overlong, running into two or even three pages. Wrong spellings and initial capitals, the bane of Indian publishing, show up in this book too. In a few places the narrative suffers from bewildering time warps. For instance, in the Third Chapter, events separated by many years or even decades, are juxtaposed. Chapter Fifteen on, "Life in Uniform", contains some episodes that have already appeared in the earlier narrative.

It is unfortunate that a soldier cannot overcome the Army lexicon and takes it for granted that the lay reader will understand his language. This may be one reason why a military author cannot reach the civilian. He must de-mystify his life and profession alike, as has been done by

John Masters in the *Bugles and a Tiger*.

The support the soldier receives from his wife is vividly described. Her turbulations when her soldier's life is snuffed out are portrayed with great sensitivity.

The author with his ancestral roots in Pakistan, had also much of his Service spent in dealing with that country's Army - in 1948, in 1965, in 1971 and again during the return of POWs at the Wagah Check Post. He has made some very perceptive observations about Pakistan's Army Officers, their values and culture, the unjustified feeling of superiority they harbour, and the stark variance in their aggressive public posture and brutality towards Indian POWs on the one hand and privately expressed warmth towards their Indian counterparts on the other.

Those at the helm of India's military security need to seriously ponder over two seemingly innocuous remarks of the author. The first, that in armed conflicts we are only a shade better than Pakistan. This is no complement for a country with great power potential and aspirations. Pakistan has, it will be conceded, managed to keep India almost continuously engaged since 1947. In the last two decades, it has torn asunder India's internal security without actively engaging her own Armed Forces. India, therefore, in keeping with its size and resources, should become a military power to be reckoned with not only by Pakistan, but also by other potential adversaries.

The second remark concerns the lack of genuine interest for Ex-Servicemen amongst those in Service. This in fact, is an indictment. How can the government and the society be blamed for Ex-Servicemen's woes if the military itself, which claims to be a "total institution", does not care for its own?

Rightly, the author projects camaraderie and loyalty as the soldier's most cherished values. The reader, therefore, will be aghast to find him bad-mouthing many of his superiors he did not approve of or who did not advance his career. Had he been imperturbable, like senior commanders ought to be, he would not have carried this unnecessary load of bitterness through his career and for more than two decades into retirement.

The last two chapters add only to the length of the Book and shed no new light on the issues the author has tackled.

The "gap of ignorance" which alienates the Indian soldier from the society and which the Author undertook to bridge, remains. It awaits a suitable "wielder of the pen". Would the Indian John Masters please come forward and bridge this gap? Till then the Falcon and its ilk will nest only in the shelves of military libraries.

## Younghusband – The Soldier, The Man\*

LT GEN R K JASBIR SINGH PVSM (RETD)\*\*

Younghusband – a 'Damned Rum Name', teetering on the edge of absurdity, unlikely but imperious, as the Author puts it—a name evocative of high adventure and intrigue. Any biography set in the hey-day of the British Empire with intrepid Englishmen venturing where no man has been before, is fascinating reading. And when the biography is about the greatest adventurer of them all, a foremost player of the Great Game, then the book becomes "un-put-downable".

Francis Edward Younghusband was born in Murree in 1863. His father was an Army officer, who had taken part in the First Afghan War, in the conquest of Sind, as ADC to Sir Charles Napier, and in the "Mutiny" in 1857. His grandfather was a Major General. So it was pre-ordained that young Francis join the Army. Commissioned into the King's Dragoon Guards, which was then stationed at Meerut, he soon found that peace-time soldiering was a deadly bore. His childhood hero had been his maternal uncle, Robert Shaw, a tea-planter and explorer, and he was determined to follow in his footsteps. A brief holiday in the mountains convinced Younghusband that his destiny lay in exploration and travel. He got deeply involved in the Great Game—the battle of wits between Tsarist Russia and British India for control of the uncharted territory of High Asia.

It was William Lockhart (later to become the C-in-C) who first spotted Younghusband's talents as a potential spy, and it was not long before he was sent to little known Manchuria, where it was feared the Russians would make their next move in the Great Game. And it was this incredible mission, which took Younghusband to the fringes of Siberia, to the borders of Korea and finally across the Gobi Desert and down the Mustagh Pass into Baltistan—a feat unparalleled till that time—that earned him the title of 'the father of Karakoram exploration', and the adulation of the British public. Later in an expedition to Gilgit, he explored another pass, Saltoro, which was rumoured to lead to Baltistan. He climbed a glacier, and the pass at the top of this glacier was subsequently re-named Younghusband Pass. Today it is better known as Indira Col. Younghusband later joined India's Political Department. After a brief interlude in Rajasthan trying to "aid in the development of native races to higher standards", he was soon

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**Younghusband – The Last Great Imperial Adventurer.** By Patrick French (London : Flamingo, 1994), pp.440, £ 8.99, ISBN 0-00-637601-0.

Lt Gen R K Jasbir Singh is a member of the USI Council. During his Army career he commanded a corps in Northern Command. He also served as the Military Secretary at Army Headquarters.

chaffing at the bit. Succour came when he was summoned by the Viceroy, Lord George Nathaniel Curzon, with whom he had struck an instant rapport when he was the Deputy Secretary of State for India, and who was to have a profound influence on his career. Curzon had been exercised by the question of Tibet since the start of his Viceroyalty. Its geographical location, caught between Russia, China and India, gave it unique strategic significance. The Tibetans had been troublesome neighbours, according to Curzon, and besides not honouring the treaty drawn on their behalf by China, (even though Curzon felt that China's claim to suzerainty was a 'constitutional fiction') they were suspected of having secret dealings with the Russians. So Younghusband was tasked to go to Tibet.

Younghusband's foray into Tibet has been well-documented. An excuse for the cold-blooded invasion of Tibet had to be manufactured to appease the liberals in Britain. So the Tibetans were accused of holding on to two Sikkimese and some Yaks, that had allegedly mistakenly crossed the border! (Indian war veterans would remember 1965?). It was a case of blatant display of arrogance and imperialism that led to two incursions into Tibet, with the hapless Tibetans trying to stem the naked violation of their sacred territory with swords and spears and a gun that could fire just one bullet (matchlocks) after its fuse was lit, against an invader armed with modern weaponry. An idea of the disparate engagement between the two forces can be gauged from the casualties inflicted at Chumi Shengo (Hot Springs). The invading force suffered six lightly wounded and six seriously wounded—the Tibetans suffered 222 wounded and 628 killed including two Generals. It was a massacre true and simple; But this was just the beginning. Thousands of Tibetans soldiers, monks and civilians were killed, monasteries looted and the countryside ravaged. The Thirteenth Dalai Lama with his entourage fled to Mongolia. Ironically, the Tibetan Expedition achieved little in deciding the status of Tibet, nor did it bring new stability to Asia. The crippling and humiliating Treaty of Lhasa drawn by Younghusband was disowned by the British Government. Ultimately, the only substantive gain from the invasion of Tibet for Britain was the right to keep a couple of trade agents and a telegraph wire inside Tibet. Whilst Britain was recognised as a foreign power, China was not, thus strengthening the latter's suzerainty over Tibet. There never had been a coherent British policy on Tibet.

But for Younghusband Tibet was a revelation in more ways than one. In his journey back to India, he experienced what he describes as "indescribable joy". In a blinding flash the "essential goodness of the world" and "that men were good at heart" were revealed to him. A devout Christian, he became increasingly obsessed with the need for unity between



religions. He was a bit of a prude but after Tibet he preached free love to the shock of the British public. The Younghusband who had once written to Curzon that it was "their duty and privilege to take over the government of inferior races, particularly Asiatics and Africans, and administer, discipline and protect them" was ultimately to become a champion for India's freedom.

Patrick French in his remarkable biography of Younghusband, has brought out vividly the metamorphosis of this soldier, mystic and explorer—from being a callow youth to explorer extraordinary.

He has interwoven his own experiences with Younghusband by following in his footsteps through the Gobi Desert to India. A thoroughly researched book, within a proper historical perspective, laced with subtle humour, it reads like a travelogue in parts and is full of adventure and excitement. It is unlike any biography one has read. What impresses most is that the author wrote this wise and perceptive narrative at the young age of twenty eight.

#### ARTICLES FOR THE USI JOURNAL

1. Members are welcome to forward articles pertaining to national security and defence matters for publication in the USI Journal. Articles should preferably be around 2,500 words. These should be forwarded in duplicate in double space on A-4 size paper, along with a floppy disk (1.44 MB diskette), IBM Compatible, on MS Word for Windows 97. The articles should be sent to the Editor, United Service Institution of India, Rao Tula Ram Marg, Post Bag No. 8, Vasant Vihar PO, New Delhi-110057. Alternately, articles may be sent through e-mail on [dirusi@nde.vsnl.net.in](mailto:dirusi@nde.vsnl.net.in). The Editor reserves the right to make alterations.
2. The full name and address of the author along with a brief Curriculum Vitae should be given. Serving officers should enclose no-objection certificate signed by their immediate superior for publication of their articles.
3. The author will receive a copy of the issue of the Journal in which his article appears along with three offprints. A suitable honorarium will also be paid after the article is published.

## Short Reviews of Recent Books

**Resisting the Bomb : A History of the World Nuclear Disarmament Movement, 1954-1970 – The Struggle Against the Bomb.** *Lawrence S Wittner (Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press, 1997), pp.473, £ 16.95, ISBN 0-8047-3169-1.*

Ever since the fateful day in 1945 when the world's first nuclear bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, avoidance of nuclear fratricide has engaged the minds of all right thinking individuals and bodies the World over. The trajectory of the nuclear disarmament movement has thus been two tracked; an institutional course under organisations such as the U N acting through multilateral agreements and charters and a track II course impelled by the unempowered yet vast body of anti nuclear activists. This second volume in the trilogy on nuclear disarmament examines the role of non institutional nuclear disarmament activists in curbing nuclear arms race and preventing nuclear war in crucial years of Cold War, from 1954 to 1970.

From 1954 to 1958, intellectuals of great standing such as Bertrand Russell breathed freshness into anti nuclear activism. Commencing with the Russell-Einstein Manifesto of 1955, appeals by Albert Schweitzer in 1957-58 and the Pugwash Conferences, the nuclear disarmament movement gained momentum. At each stage however efforts of peace activists were stymied by policy makers who insulated from public opinion, fostered measures dictated by the greed for greater power status in France, Soviet Union, China, Britain and the United States. Avidly anti nuclear nations such as India were forced to go nuclear by the needs of regional polity, after the Sino-Indian War in 1962 and the Indo-Pak 1965 operations, despite strong protests by anti nuclear activists such as C Rajagopalachari, C V Raman and eminent Gandhians – RR Diwaker and JJ Singh.

However resistance of governments to nuclear disarmament transformed gradually from severe opposition to the pacifists in the 1950's to support of proscription of atmospheric nuclear tests in the 1970's. Post 1970, the movement was seen to have lost its momentum due to waning hostility between the two blocs, exhaustion of the activists and rise of issues such as the Vietnam War. The author's conclusion of a disjuncture between peaceful desires of individuals versus their public stand of belligerence is instructive and is being replicated in general. A dichotomy between personal values and necessities of role playing as the national security manager, of securing narrow national interests vis a vis international sensibilities, has contributed to the overall failure of total nuclear

disarmament. The influence of public opinion in curbing the nuclear arms race and averting a nuclear holocaust highlighted by Wittner is undeniable. A telling lesson in the Indo-Pak context thus lurks in the book and that is – informed public opinion alone can prevent nations from hurtling towards a nuclear disaster. This painstaking chronicle of the Track II nuclear peace movement is thus a definitive contribution to anti nuclearism and is a must read for nuclear chauvinists and peace activists alike.

*Colonel Rahul K Bhonsle*

**Strategic Studies and the World Order : The Global Politics of Deterrence.** By Bradley S Klein (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp.196, ISBN 0-521-46644-X.

After the nuclear tests of May 1998, many questions have been raised by the security and economic experts and the public at large. Is the country safer today than prior to the acquisition of this capability? What is the influence of nuclear weapons on the society and social programmes? Are nuclear weapons a credible deterrent and if so what is a minimum credible deterrent? What is the effect of nuclear weapons on the conduct of foreign policy? Surprising as it may seem, a book that was published way back in 1994 provides some insight to the answers we are looking for.

Bradley S Klein, in his extremely absorbing (albeit heavy in the beginning) book unambiguously records all the arguments and debates on the nuclear strategy and employment of nuclear weapons in the Western World for the last 50 years or so. The author explores the links between modernity, state building and strategic violence and the NATO's attempt to make world order in the image of Western identity by a set of dynamic political practices. He also examines the security dilemmas faced by nations as also what constitutes national security in the globalised and liberalised world. A study of this book helps in understanding balance of power, the states system, alliances, deterrence and security as such. The chapters on "Nuclear Revolution" and "Deterrence as a Social Practice" are a must for every decision-maker be it a politician, an economist or a person in uniform.

*Air Marshal Bharat Kumar PVSM, AVSM (Retd)*

**Meeting Peace Operations' Requirements While Maintaining MTW Readiness.** Edited by Jennifer Morrison Taw, David Persselin and Maren Leed (Santa Monica, CA : RAND, 1998), pp.75, Price not indicated, ISBN 0-8330-2568-6.

What are the effects of Peace Operations on the Major Theatres of

War (MTW)? What should the US Government do? What should be its Force structure, its training as also the equipment required and its maintenance?

All the above and many more issues are discussed by the authors in a report compiled by Rand, a non-profit organisation, to help the decision makers arrive at logical and workable solutions to all aspects of peace operations and at the same time not reduce readiness for MTWs. The report also brings out the benefits of Peace Operations in that new equipment, techniques and tactics can be tried which may not be possible in Theatre Wars. A well researched and informative book of interest to the top brass of the Indian Armed Forces, in particular the Army, which is frequently called upon for insurgency operations, low intensity conflicts and aid to civil power.

A good reference book and a must for all Defence libraries.

*Commodore R P Khanna, AVSM (Retd)*

**The History of Landmines.** By Mike Croll (UK : Leo Cooper, 1998), pp.164, £ 18.95, ISBN 0-85052-6280.

Deeply researched, elaborately illustrated, and laced with many interesting anecdotes, verses, quotes and pencil sketches, this book is a veritable treasure trove on mine warfare since times of yore.

The author goes back to the medieval times, and impediments like goads, abatis, concealed man-traps, sharpened stakes, caltrops, lillies, panjis and stimulus are discussed in the opening chapter. The types of mines, their period of advent – all are there in this remarkable collection of hard facts and statistics. Virtually a gold mine on mine warfare, and countermine technology, this fascinating book is eminently readable too. The layman will never find himself subjected to military jargon or the drab and droll idiom generally associated with military manuals. Mike Croll starts with Caesar in Gaul in 52BC and ends only with Milacikovic in Bosnia in 1998. Enroute, the American Civil War, the two World Wars and the numerous smaller conflicts; in which mine warfare and de-mining operations played a significant role; are dealt with a thoroughness and sound professional skill that only the Royal Engineers' Bomb Disposal experts can muster. He has indeed uncovered a topic that has been buried for far too long.

*Lieutenant Colonel A K Sharma (Retd)*

**Nuclear Terrorism and Countermeasures. Hearing before the Military Research and Development Subcommittee of the Committee on National Security House of Representatives (1 and 2 October 1997), pp.297, Price not indicated, ISBN 0-16-056199-X.**

The world order presents challenges different in degree if not in kind. One such challenge is the enhanced visibility of terrorism. This is an aspect of graver denotation if one takes note of the odds of nuke-power in the hands of terrorists. The hearing before the US Military Research and Development Sub Committee of the Committee on National Security of the House of Representatives, held on 1 and 2 October 1997, compiled and published recorded statements of eminent witnesses in a document titled "Nuclear Terrorism and Counter Measures" dealing with the aspect of nuclear terrorism.

Curt Weldon, Chairman of the Sub Committee, drew attention to the Steven Spielberg movie *Peacemaker* wherein terrorists threaten to blow up New York city with stolen Russian nuclear weapons and commented that this work of fiction could become reality as Russian nuclear weapons and materials have proliferated. He emphasised the seriousness of the threat this would pose for US national security. The requirement for more resources, training and coordination amongst various agencies to ward off this threat was stressed. Weldon stated that General Lebed had professed the loss of 84 suitcase-sized nuclear bombs of 1 KT capacity each from the erstwhile Soviet Union. Each of these bombs was capable of killing one million people. These nuclear devices could be made available to the terrorists.

With the crumbling of the Soviet Union, the Russian economy is in doldrums. One quarter of the Russian population is below the poverty line. The Armed Forces and bureaucracy have become corrupt. The officers and ranks are unpaid and unhappy. In 1994, Mr Yeltsin described Russia as the "biggest Mafia State in the world" and "super power of crime". Drug trading and narco-terrorism is rampant and organised by retrenched Armed Forces personnel and the staff of intelligence agencies. Russian strategic forces are nearing extinction for want of funds and maintenance. The courts in Russia are corrupt and under the control of criminal syndicates.

The report also states that Russia is clandestinely furthering nuclear plans of Iran and Iraq. It has also been said that there were over 10,000 members of Japanese Supreme Truth Cult who have over \$ 1 billion in funds. Some dissident Russian nuclear scientists are members of the cult. This threat to the US is real and serious. A monitoring of nuclear weapons to prevent them from reaching the terrorists was thus vital.

Further, there is the threat of logic bomb – Trojan horses, worms, viruses as part of the new arsenal – whereby non-state, sub-state actors or even an individual could take on a super power.

The Report highlights how the Russian Organised Crime (ROC) can be met. Salient points are as under :-

- (a) Define ROC and broaden the base of knowledge.
- (b) Enhance training programmes.
- (c) Insulate aid from ROC.
- (d) Coordinate with G-7.
- (e) Support business in Russia.
- (f) Create a shared database.
- (g) Expand database to track ROC.
- (h) Professionalise Russian bureaucracy.
- (i) Regulate industry, business and trade.
- (k) Strengthen legal infrastructure in Russia.
- (l) Follow the money sources for organised crimes.

Arnold Warshawsky of the Technology Assessment Group highlighted new technologies that are being pursued to meet nuclear terrorist threat by suggesting five layers of defence as under :-

- (a) 1<sup>st</sup> Layer     Protect nuclear weapons at the source. The US must help Russia in doing so.
- (b) 2<sup>nd</sup> Layer     Catch if the first layer of defence has been penetrated.
- (c) 3<sup>rd</sup> Layer     Detect the nuclear weapons and materials as they come to the US. A number of governmental agencies are working on this.
- (d) 4<sup>th</sup> Layer     Interdict the movement of nuclear weapons and materials to the US bases and cities.
- (e) 5<sup>th</sup> Layer     Ability to destroy or neutralise these weapons and materials. Wide Area Tracking System (WATS) has been developed for this purpose.

Needless to say that training, coordination amongst various agencies, involvement at the highest level and adequate resources, would be needed to meet and counter terrorism.

*Colonel NN Bhatia (Retd)*

**Shattering the Myth : Islam Beyond Violence.** By Bruce Lawrence (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1998), pp.237, \$ 15.95, ISBN 0-691-11487-0.

Although we have had Islam in our midst for over a millennium, and have some 350 million subcontinental Muslim neighbours, it is surprising that some of us still harbour the myth that equates Islam with violence. Much of our misinformed perception has been shaped by the hegemony of the Western media, which in turn is but a tool in the Western neocolonial embrace of oil rich West Asia, and its impending foray into the nascent Central Asian states. This explains to some extent the 'bloody borders of Islam', to use a Huntingtonian sound bite. Some of us even perceive Kashmir as the march of a nebulous monolithic entity called fundamentalist Islam, ignoring the inter-state and ethnic dimension of the conflict. In short, the book does regrettably have a wide constituency even in our part of the world.

Professor Lawrence has done a commendable job of identifying the malaise, which essentially is our inability to distinguish between Islam and its CNN clone. Being a self-confessed humanist, he brings his sympathetic approach to bear on what he rightly describes as a complex religious system shaped as much by its ethical postulates as by the socio-political circumstances of its adherents. His credentials are impeccable for he holds the Chair of the Department of Religion at Duke University. He probes and illumines for the lay audience the historical antecedents and contemporary multivalent meanings of several topics of interest, namely, the status of women, the concept of *jihad*, the Shia-Sunni divide, and the ascendance of Islamism or fundamentalism. The societies stretching from the Pacific to the Atlantic are thus brought to life in their diversity. The chapter on Shah Bano has insights for South Asian readers, in that it reveals the enmeshed nature of identity, politics and faith. He traverses the ideological terrain in the Islamic crescent and assesses the implications of the extant political economy on the same. He opines that nationalism remains a potent impulse in Muslim societies. In light of this, a reinterpretation of the so-called Islamic threat conjured up in the 'clash of civilizations' thesis is in order.

The book could be a starter in self-directed study of our environs, given that such study is a necessity among those who are both practitioners

and commentators on security. The bibliography and the footnotes can guide any such effort. Thus will we be able to read between the lines of what passes for 'news' in a wired global village, and reclaim the traditional Indian ethos of syncretism, acceptance, and detachment.

*Major Ali Ahmed*

**The Rise and Fall of World Orders.** By *Torbjorn L Knutsen* (Manchester UK : Manchester University Press, 1999), pp.324, £ 14.99, ISBN 0-7190-4058-2.

Change is the law of nature and so is the world order. The author acknowledges "some projects are like wisdom teeth : they are slow in coming, they are difficult to keep clean, they sit deep and are hard to extract".

With this philosophy in the background, he challenges notions like 'overstretch', 'end of history', 'clash of civilisations', 'democratic peace and other theories and concepts which have been proposed to explain international relations after the Cold War. Drawing on 400 years of great-power politics, the author develops a fresh alternative to the debate on the role of great powers and on their rise and decline in international politics. Theoretically challenging, Knutsen's volume provides a fresh approach to recent debates on war, wealth, peace and power and makes for good reading. It sheds critical light on the scholars like Paul Kennedy, Francis Fukuyama, Samuel Huntington, Bruce Russett and others. Part One of the book deals with the patterns of the past including the wave of great wars, the phase of hegemony, challenge, disruptive competition and the consequent cyclical patterns of modern world order. There is a comparative assessment, in the normative mode, of the Spanish, the Dutch and the British hegemonies, and the reasons for their rise and decline. In one of the tables, he compares the average frequency of great-power wars in modern history, from 1500 AD to 1900 AD. Part Two of the book addresses the Twentieth Century American hegemony. It perceives the rise of the United States and the dissolution of the Soviet Union as evidence of the vital role played by norms and rules in international relations. Pax Americana's challenges, responses and the end of the US hegemony are assured.

As regards the figures, the book details the battles fought by the great powers, sea power concentration through the times and the hegemons as strong powers and strong states with the additive of tables, maps and an exhaustive bibliography on World Order.

The book is interesting and well written.

*IR Kumar*



**A Nuclear Strategy for India.** By Rear Admiral Raja Menon (New Delhi : Sage Publications, 2000), pp. 316, Rs. 245.00, ISBN 0-7619-9461-0.

When one looks at the Indian nuclear scene, what strikes one the most is the standard refrain of 'know all experts', and that includes the author of this book, that Indian politicians, bureaucrats and planners lack a sense of vision. What is forgotten is that the Indian progress to the 'Peaceful Nuclear Explosion' in 1974 was not the consequence of any long term military planning or a response to a foreign policy compulsion. It was pushed by domestic politics, to demonstrate a technological competence.

Something similar could be said of the 1998 Pokhran tests. The jingoistic pronouncements after the tests tended to suggest that the event was for a domestic pay-off rather than any long term security concerns.

The author suggests that India in its search for a nuclear strategy and doctrine take a leaf from the nuclear litany obtaining during the Cold War, particularly that emanating from the USA. This to my mind is non-sequitur. Undoubtedly a whole host of 'think tanks', academics and experts emerged during the period who expounded the most astounding theories and bizarre scenarios on how a nuclear war could be fought and won. Added to these were quantitative methods which were dominant over every conceivable activity. That arsenals of the two super powers multiplied to an extent where the World could be destroyed several times over, was more due to the momentum that nuclear industry had acquired rather than any rational or plausible theory. Of course the so called experts knew that nuclear weapons would never be used based as they were on 'FEAR'. This helped them to get away with the implausible.

The author has undoubtedly deeply researched nuclear issues, India's polity and technology which according to him were important to establish a trace or trend on the basis of which things were done. The book, however, makes for a laboured reading and is more in the nature of a dissertation for a post-graduate degree. The lay would have difficulty in discerning what specifics of strategy are being suggested. The author also credits the Indian scientific community with a competence profile that they may not possess. ICBM's, cruise missiles and nuclear submarines advocated for the Indian nuclear arsenal are unlikely to be realised even in the distant future. To my mind India would have to settle for a modest nuclear capability.

Yet here is a wealth of information in the book which scholars and academics of the subject could meaningfully use in their studies and arguments.

*Air Marshal KD Chadha PVSM, AVSM (Retd)*

**From Surprise to Reckoning : The Kargil Review Committee Report.**  
(New Delhi : Sage Publications, 2000), pp.277, Rs. 295.00, ISBN 0-7619-9466-1.

The publishers and the National Security Council Secretariat must at the outset be congratulated for the timely and quality work that they have presented, not merely to the strategic community, but also to the informed citizen. The book will certainly help stretch the attention spans that are in danger of constriction in this age of advertisement jingles. Therefore the memory of the Kargil saviours who are not now with us will live on to ensure that their sacrifice was not in vain, as hoped for by the Committee in the Epilogue to the book. The Committee also deserves praise for the exemplary dispatch with which it has delivered its findings to the nation.

The Report, that originally came out in December 1999, has attracted considerable attention. Even the criticism that has come its way may be credited to it, for it has been the catalyst of its own antithesis. It is in conjunction with the commentary by eminent strategic thinkers that the book must be read. Unfortunately the government in its wisdom has retained the appendices of the Report thereby depriving us of the complete wisdom of the argument of the Committee. Nevertheless, after the official history of the 1947-48 Indo-Pak War this is a refreshing change, and hopefully will be a precedent for the future. As the Report recommends – an Indian white paper on nuclear weapons ought to soon be in print to institutionalise this trend.

The Report is in the tradition of the Israeli Agranat Report done after the Yom Kippur War and the report done in the UK after the Falklands War. The mandate of the Report was to examine the events leading up to the Kargil intrusion and recommend measures to prevent recurrence of such aggression. The committee was not statutorily set up under the Enquiries Act, but that in no way has detracted it from its access to documents and personalities. The committee has studiously tried to restrict itself to its mandate, and doubtless this has enabled keeping the report to manageable length in terms of time and volume. This in turn has enhanced its effectiveness. However adequate response to streamlining of the security mechanism can only be possible on incorporating the findings of the Lt Gen ARK Reddy Report that has dealt with military and in-conflict phase of the episode. Understandably the latter has restricted circulation.

Clearly it would be superfluous to recommend the book as a 'must read'. Therefore this review will highlight the aspects of interest that the reader may like to pay careful attention to, in arriving at his own conclusion.

The first is the sole arraignment of a Brigadier for lapses in duty. The others involved, particularly those in the intelligence establishment, seem to have been exonerated under the sweep of the judgement – 'systemic failure'. Secondly, the Committee devotes a whole chapter on the linkage of the Pakistan nuclear weapon programme with the Indian advances towards the *Shakti* tests. The official line has always been that our programme has at its core the security threat from China, as enunciated by the PM in a letter to the White House, infamously leaked to the *New York Times*.

Third is the self-contradictory phrasing used to characterise the intrusion. At a place in the text it is a 'short sharp war', whereas elsewhere it is considered as 'not being a major operation in military terms of size and capability'. Following from this is the fourth point, namely, if the latter be true, then the Indian move of forces to the border and *Op Talwar* by the Navy appears to have been an overreaction. This brings one to the last, though most important, point on the Report stated thus. "India cannot be accused of risking nuclear escalation by defending its territory. The onus of any such development can only rest with the aggressor." This is arguably a somewhat dangerous formulation in the nuclear age that has recently dawned on the subcontinent.

Clearly there is need for a paradigm change that is not found reflected in the recommendations of the Committee. It has been accused elsewhere of using its opportunity to 'ride its favourite hobby horses'. It is for this reason that the otherwise commendable report requires to be read with a critical approach. It is no wonder then that clear evidence of its impact in changing structures has yet to emerge.

Major Ali Ahmed

**Court Martial and Military Matters.** By Brig Nilendra Kumar (New Delhi : Manas Publications, 2000), pp.202, Rs. 495.00, ISBN 81-7049-106-1.

The military judicial system is inexpensive and expeditious. Especially for the jawans, justice is dispensed fast through summary trials. It is another matter if this can be just, because the judge and the prosecutor are the same – the jawan's commanding officer (CO). The officer supposed to defend him called "the friend of the accused" is a subordinate of the CO, and is a mute witness to the trial. It required great courage on the part of the author, a serving brigadier, to say "the nature of evidence marshalled in different types of cases often demands that alternative charges be drafted. More often than not it is a result of incomplete investigation and an aim to secure conviction of the accused on one charge or the other". Under

the circumstances, the only hope for the accused to get justice depends on the "correct professional conduct expected from officers handling disciplinary cases in the Army". In fact the above mentioned is the title of a chapter in the book.

The present system of dispensing justice is a heritage from the British, based on their need to keep a mercenary army disciplined. There is urgent need to study the military justice system of other democratic countries and make suitable changes in our system. The British themselves have amended the laws for their army twice in the recent past. The British Court Martial Appellate Court consists of Lord Chief Justice, judges of the High Court and such other persons of legal experience as the Lord Chancellor may appoint. It has power to determine any question to do justice and can even authorise a new trial. It also has power for full judicial review. In the USA, the Military Justice Act 1968 guaranteed to the accused a legally qualified counsel. The commanders are prohibited from interfering with military justice. For the other ranks, the US military legal code allows the accused other rank to ask one third of the members of the court trying him to be other ranks.

There has not been any revolutionary change in post-Independence India, in military law and the system of dispensing justice. Of course, changes like abolition of corporal punishment to other ranks, opportunity to approach High Courts and Supreme Court for judicial review, etc. have been introduced, but these can hardly be called revolutionary. The author gives a number of suggestions to modernise military laws and procedures with special relevance to the Judge Advocate General's Branch. He concedes the changes proposed might appear to be fantastic, but reinforces his contention quoting Lenin, "Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement."

*Subedar Major N Kunju (Retd)*

**Pakistan : A Withering State.** By Sreedhar and Nilesh Bhagat (Delhi : Wordsmiths, 1999), pp.208, Rs. 456.00, ISBN 87412-00-3.

Historian Taylor says "don't argue with history". The creation of Pakistan did exactly that when, without any historical precedent, religion was made the *raison d'etre* of a nation-state on the grounds that religion would give Pakistan the strength to become a self respecting and a self reliant geographical reality.

Problems started immediately after its inception with Pakistani rulers equating Pakistan with India without even an identity. According to the

authors, this Indocentric obsession, coupled with religious bigotry have progressively led to such distortions as to question Pakistan's claim to being a nation-state. Mismanagement of the body politic has reached a saturation point where it is being described as a failed state with not many analysts willing to paint an optimistic picture. There is scant regard for state institutions, and successive military dictators prevent anybody questioning their absolute power.

There is also a misplaced perception that Pakistan is the logical inheritor of the Mughal Empire. What is forgotten is that a medieval ideology valid for an earlier simpler society could not serve as a blueprint for a modern state in this age of information revolution.

Pakistani commentator Maleeha Lodhi speaks of Pakistan being plagued "by a debt ridden economy, a fractured society, a federation under unprecedented strain that is symptomatic of virtual institutional breakdown". Ethnic, sectarian and provincial divides pervade where a Punjab centric elite denies the legitimate rights of other provinces. This according to the authors could generate centrifugal forces which could well lead to the disintegration of the State.

A question often asked is does India not suffer from afflictions similar to those of Pakistan? The answer is perhaps yes but then India has safety valves to resolve ethno-centric issues politically. In Pakistan, consensual politics has never been a part of the political process due to feudal and elite domination. This has also been the cause for periodic military coups.

The book is now somewhat dated as there has been another military takeover after it was written. The authors are right in predicting that unless Pakistan gets a visionary leadership, ethnic, social, economic and political tensions may well tear it apart.

*Air Marshal KD Chadha, PVSM, AVSM (Retd)*

**Awakening China : Politics, Culture and Class in the Nationalist Revolution.** By John Fitzgerald (Stanford, CA : Stanford University Press, 1996), pp.461, £ 37.50, ISBN 0-8047-2659-0.

This book is a serious study of politics, culture and class in China during the early part of the Twentieth Century – a very critical period in Chinese history and in the evolution of modern China. Around Circa 1910 history witnessed the downfall and demise of the imperial Manchurian Qing Dynasty. This last of the many imperial dynasties was followed by a chaotic

period of rule by several powerful war lords, who held absolute sway over different regions and provinces of China. Fortunately this troubled period of disunity did not last more than two decades and gave rise to the Nationalist Revolution led by Sun Yat Sen to replace the existing feudal autocratic system by a liberal democracy.

Although China had not been colonised by any of the Western powers as India had been by the British, yet short of colonisation many of these powers, during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth centuries, through unequal treaties and concessions at various ports like Shanghai, had almost a free run of the country. These very Western countries, who today cry foul against what they now term as 'smuggling' of drugs into their countries, had in 1842 gone to war against China to enforce their right to trade in opium! The depths to which the mighty Chinese Empire had sunk is well illustrated in this book in Daniel Defoe's record of Robinson Crusoe's fleeting impressions of China as the solitary sailor passed through Guangzhou on his way home to England - "What are their ports, supplied with a few junks and barks, to our navigation, merchant fleets and powerful navies? Our city of London has more trade than all their mighty empire. One English, or Dutch, or French man-of-war of eighty guns would fight and destroy all the shipping of China."

Seeing what China is today, it is difficult to believe that the great imperial Qing Empire could have at one time been held in such low esteem as narrated in this book. More difficult to believe is that a British Admiral, Anson, had in 1743 forced an entry into Guangzhou Port with a single ship *HMS Centurion*. By failing to put up an effective resistance, it was felt by the Europeans that the Chinese had exposed - "the timidity, dissimulation and dishonesty that underlay their cultivated appearance of civility and wisdom". It is from such descriptions that one is able to appreciate the achievements of China's greats like Sun Yat Sen, Mao Zedong and Zhou Enlai in bringing about the Nationalist Revolution in the 1920s and awakening the people of China towards unification of the country under a strong Republican government at the Centre.

This book will be of great interest and value to scholars studying this critical period of Chinese history to know how the Nationalist Revolution awakened the slumbering Chinese and their contribution to the making of modern China. The author does not, unfortunately, believe in writing in simple English. Readers would be well advised, therefore, to have a good dictionary handy.

*Major General Samir Sinha (Retd)*

**Russia and Iran : A Strategic Partnership?.** By Galia Golan (UK : *The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 1998), pp.66, Price not indicated, ISBN 1-86203-007-3.

The Royal Institute of International Affairs has to its credit a number of useful research papers on various issues. It has now published a comprehensive Discussion Paper authored by a professor at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The paper discusses the tumultuous relationship between Russia and Iran. By and large their relations have been friendly as Russian interests in Iran have been relatively consistent. The other major aspects analysed by the author are Central Asia and Caucasus, Turkey, arms sales and economic relations. With regard to discord with Turkey, according to the author Russia perceives Turkey to be an agent of the US and is trying to expand its influence eastward after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Another area of discord is Iran's attitude towards Bosnia. Despite a lasting friendship with Iran, military or nuclear alliance is not envisaged.

An informative book, of interest to research scholars.

*Commodore R P Khanna, AVSM (Retd)*

**The New Caucasus : Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. Chatham House Papers.** By Edmund Herzig (London : *The Royal Institute of International Affairs*, 1999), pp.165, Price not indicated, ISBN 1-85567-353-6.

The author, in six chapters, assesses the political and economic developments of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia and analyses the factors that are shaping the region's near to medium term future. The extent of endurance of the current political stability has been questioned by him as much as whether the curtailment of the economic decline will lead to sustainable growth. He has considered the possible outcomes to the stalemates that have frozen conflicts but left them unresolved. The author explains the prospects for cooperation and integration among the Caucasian countries.

Chapter Two is a focus on political development and the twin processes of nation and state-building to examine the balance between ethnic and civic criteria for establishing national communities, and to question whether the Caucasian states yet possess political institutions capable of sustaining state sovereignty and national cohesion. It assesses progress in the development of democracy, of new legitimising ideologies and of civil society. Chapter Three elucidates the conflicts in these regions and the other security challenges confronting the governments. Special consideration is given to the factors that sparked and fuelled the conflicts

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and to those that affect the prospects for their resolution. Chapter Four is an analysis of the new international environment in terms of the factors that are shaping the interests and policies of the Caucasian states, and of regional and extra-regional actors. The chapter also assesses the achievements of Caucasian states' foreign policies, and questions whether the post-Soviet world order will break the historical pattern of brief periods of Caucasian independence truncated by conflictual great power intervention.

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Chapter five examines economic changes in the Caucasus and possibility of survival of Caucasian economies, with their small markets and limited resources. The prospects for the realisation of plans to establish the South Caucasus as a transit corridor for east-west and north-south trade are discussed. The chapter also focusses on the social impact of economic change, questioning whether the Caucasian economies will be able to provide even the most important basic needs of their people.

The book concludes with a highlight on trends and dynamics for stability in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia, and identifies key priorities for the medium-term development of the South Caucasus region.

A very useful and informative book for all.

*Colonel PK Vasudeva (Retd)*

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**Usiata : Croatian Separatism & European Politics, 1929-1945.** By Srdja Trifkovic (London : The Lord Byron Foundation for Balkan Studies, 1998), pp.323, Price not indicated, ISBN 1-892478-00-5.

The rise of ethnic separatism was as pronounced during various phases of history as it is today. At various junctures of history various powers made effective use of ethnic community for fomenting trouble in a state with single-minded aim to weaken it in the initial stages and, later, to fragment it so that the state does not pose a viable threat to the other powers in the region. Due to exponential spread of media, the problems are more evident and presented by media barons the way they are directed by their masters, to achieve their planned objectives.

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This book can be aptly described as a source book for presentation of separatist movements and its analysis. Yugoslavia is characterised as modern day example how a nation can be fragmented at the will of some powerful countries on frivolous grounds. This well researched book initiates the background of the process of disintegration of Yugoslavia using Croats as tool of convenience. The analysis is exceptionally presented and



systematically correlated to various events. The role of ethnic community, their exploitation by vested elements and lack of political will to fulfill their aspirations leading to separatism, are remarkably presented in this book.

This book can be best described as a text-book for researchers as well as students who intend to study the post-colonial presentation of ethnic problems.

*Captain Rajiv Ojha*

**Israel and the Bomb** (New York : Colombia University Press, 1998), pp. 470, Price not Indicated, ISBN 0-231-10483-9.

The book is an important addition to knowledge on proliferation, institutional dynamics, and strategic studies in West Asia. The author being a senior research fellow at the National Security Archive at the George Washington University has done justice to his subject. It is a 'first' in that the Israeli nuclear weapon programme has not come under such documented scrutiny yet. For that reason, and because of its parallels with the Indian experience, the book is a recommended reading. The details that the author goes into are of interest to the Middle East aficionado, but the general narrative and its conclusion carry a message for both the aware citizen and the arm chair strategist.

The parallels with the Indian case are worth a pause. Ben Gurion's vision has its echo in Nehru's vision to which we owe the foundation of our nuclear programme inbuilt in which was the path to Pokhran II. To the Israeli Bergman (scientist)-Peres (executive) combination, we have our Bhabha, whose drive enabled materialisation of the nuclear weapon option. Both programmes were never officially acknowledged and relied in large measure on external nuclear related help, in case of the Israelis on the French connection and in India on the US-Canadian help. Both countries came to rely on the doctrine of nuclear ambiguity, though Cohen characterises the Israeli posture as one of nuclear opacity.

The main difference in the programmes has been that India has tested its capability and has recently overtly weaponised. The security rationale has been more central to the Israeli effort, whereas the weight of symbolism of nuclear weapon possession has been more apparent in India. A major lesson for us is that there was a modicum of parliamentary oversight of the Israeli bomb making effort in the form of a secret inter-party committee. In our case the bomb effort, though popular, has been independently driven by the scientific lobby for its own institutional purposes, as exposed by

Itty Abraham in his *India's Atom Bomb*. A second lesson is in the fact that it has been written after perusal of primary sources that have been declassified after a thirty-year period. Such a liberty is denied in India resulting in authors like Raj Chengappa beginning with an apologia on the lack of access to documents for their work. It is to gain an insight into these parallels and divergences that the book must be read in conjunction with Perkovich's book on *India's Nuclear Bomb*.

The book traces the motivations behind the Israeli nuclear weapons programme and the manner in which it was obtained in light of institutional, political, regional and Israeli-US dynamics in the first two decades of the effort. It is a laboriously footnoted work, lucidly written and presented with high production values. Its message is that the manner of nuclearisation is in dire need of democratisation – a message that is vital for a democratic and nuclear India.

Major Ali Ahmed

**Armed Struggle and the Search for State : the Palestinian National Movement 1949-1993.** By Yezid Sayigh (New York : Oxford University Press, 1999), pp.953, \$25.99, ISBN 0-19-829643-6.

This book spans an entire epoch in the history of the contemporary Palestinian national movement, from the establishment of Israel in 1948 to the PLO-Israel Accord of 1993. Contrary to the conventional view that national liberation movements proceed with state-building only after attaining independence, the case of PLO shows that state-building may shape political institutionalism throughout the previous struggle, even in the absence of an autonomous territorial, economic and social base.

The study traces the political, ideological, and organisational evolution of the PLO. The 'armed struggle', explicates how conflict was used to mobilise the mass constituency, assert particular discourses of revolution and nationalism, construct institutions, and establish legitimacy of new political class and bureaucratic elite. The author portrays the struggle right from the 1947-48 War that marked the end of a lengthy chapter in the conflict between Arabs and Jews for possession of Palestine to the peace accord with the mediation of the US. The Lebanese crisis, vacation of Golan Heights, cease-fire and truce have been elucidated well by the author with the help of maps, figures and statistical data.

The book draws extensively on PLO archives, official publications, and internal documents of the various guerilla groups and over 400

interviews conducted by the author with the PLO rank-and-file. Its span of primary sources and conceptual framework make this volume the definitive work on the subject. It will be of great help to the researchers on Middle-East as well as PLO-Israel conflict. This book won the Kuwait-British Literary Award in 1998.

*Colonel P K Vasudeva (Retd)*

**The Two Koreas and the United States : Issues of Peace, Security and Economic Cooperation.** *Edited by Wonmo Dong (New York : ME Sharpe, 2000), pp.295, \$ 66.95, ISBN 0-7656-0533-3.*

This book is a compilation of seventeen essays based on the 1997 annual symposium of the Southern Methodist University (SMU) – Dallas Forum on Asian Affairs. As the Editor himself acknowledges in his note, the time lag between the holding of the symposium and the publishing of the book has made some of the chapters in the book slightly outdated. It could not have been imagined then that a historic summit of the two Kims could occur as early as mid-June 2000.

The essays in the book focus on the politics and economy of North Korea in an effort to understand the *raison d'être* of that country's actions and behaviour, the essence of South Korea's policy towards North Korea, the US-ROK co-operation, the Clinton administration's Korea policy as well as Korea's policies towards Russia, China and Japan, and how these policies can be synergised to stabilise the Korean Peninsula described as "one of the most dangerous flashpoints in the world."

A study of this book enhances one's understanding of the complexity underlying the inter-relationship between the two countries and the relations with the US. Of course, the North Korean point of view is presented only by American or South Korean authors. But can one blame the West alone for this? It is heartening to note the admixture of hawks such as Mr William J Taylor, Jr. with the "soft landing" approach of Selig Harrison, and Scalapino who envisage "a gradual process of unification in which neither side is swallowed by the other and the United States helps Pyongyang achieve a China-style economic transformation." This is also in line with the Clinton administration's "engagement policy with North Korea."

*Commodore RN Sharma (Retd)*

**"Korea on the Brink" : From the "12/12 Incident to the Kwangju Uprising, 1979-1980.** *By John A Wickham (Washington DC : National Defence University Press, 1999), pp.240, \$ 25.00, ISBN 1-57906-023-4.*

Late Summer of 1948 saw the partition of the Korean peninsula into

the Republic of Korea (ROK) led by Syngman Rhee, and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) led by Kim Il-Sung. With the withdrawal of American forces in 1950, North Korea attacked South, and a bitter three-year conflict ensued. More than 4 million people fled to South; many families remain divided till today. The author has explained the armistice in July 1953 that ended hostilities and created a demilitarized zone (DMZ), which winds 150 miles between North and South.

The author has attempted to provide answers to four questions. First, how did a military commander ensure continued deterrence in the face of political and social upheaval that so threatened internal stability in South Korea that intervention by North Korea seemed highly probable? Second, what role did US officials, particularly the CINC, play in the coup led by Major General Chun Doo-whan, and his subsequent rise to Presidentship? Third, what connection did that CINC have to the suppression of civilian demonstrators in 1980 that became known as the Kwangju massacre? Fourth, what are the implications for the future keeping in mind the convictions and sentencing in 1996 of ex-Presidents Chun and Roh and their associates for participation in the coup and corruption? Kwangju remains a deeply painful episode, where thousands of lives were lost, and prosecution and conviction of Chun was evidenced. Those who supported the coup leader were convicted for treason, mutiny, and graft. Chun was sentenced to death, Roh to 22 years of life imprisonment, and dozens of others to prison terms of various lengths. The author has exposed the myths and realities regarding American part in the Kwangju episode, especially "12/12 incident".

The book will be of great interest to researchers of Korean history especially when it is on the brink of being unified.

Colonel PK Vasudeva (Retd)

**Documents of the Emerging Nation: U.S. Foreign Relations 1775-1789.** Edited by Mary A. Giunta (Wilmington : A Scholarly Resources Inc., 1998), pp.311, \$19.95, ISBN 0-8420-2664-9.

The editors have gone through the diplomatic despatches, private letters and other documents from the archives, libraries, British and French sources and compiled the documents that bring out the fundamental relationship between American nationalisation and foreign relations. The book describes in detail the efforts of the likes of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, John Jay, Thomas Jefferson and many others to establish the United States of America as a new Nation. Complete information about the

treaties and conventions and definition of some technical words and phrases like "Farmer General, Chebec, Corsair, Barkentine, barquentine", given at end of the book, are educative. The details of the first voyage of an American merchant vessel *The Empress of China* in Chapter VI provides food for thought to ship owners and ship masters. This voyage opened the trade between the USA and China.

A good reference book for the research scholars engaged in the study of American foreign relations.

*Commodore R P Khanna, AVSM (Retd)*

**A Noble Crusade : The History of Eighth Army 1941 to 1945.**

*By Richard Doherty (UK : Spellmount Ltd., 1999), pp.368, £ 24.95, ISBN 1-86227-045-7.*

Speaking of the enduring éclat of the Eighth Army, whilst addressing a gathering of soldiers in Tripoli on 3 February 1943, Churchill just about summed up their elan when he said, "When the war is over, it will be enough for a man to say, 'I marched and fought with the Desert Army'." One of the men in this gathering was none other than the author's own father. Therein lies Richard Doherty's special fascination for this legendary body of troops and his *raison d'être* for putting pen to paper. And being a member of the military historical societies in the UK, Ireland and the USA; a noted success in the electronic-media; and the trustee of museums of two regiments, has helped immensely in making him fully qualified and experienced to essay this eulogy and make a good job of it. Truly, a labour of love.

Incorporation of wartime press photographs, sketches of battles, detailed orbats, and a bibliography, makes this book interesting and raises its stature to that of a text book on military history. However, what it is indeed going to be valued most for, is the lacing of the narrative with anecdotal reminiscing of the participants (including the balled – 'The D-Day Dodgers' by the Spinners), which, indeed, is touching. Those who profess to already know, whatever there is to know, about the campaign in North Africa or Italy, are advised to read the last chapter of this book, atleast. In it they will find much that is of controversial nature, right from the very necessity of the El Alamein battle in view of the then forthcoming *Operation Torch*, to the labeling of Montgomery as the greatest commander of the Eighth Army. Sir Richard McCreery; the only cavalry man with the exception of Cunningham and the last commander of the Eighth Army; who forged the last victory of the Eighth Army, under 15 Army Group, in adverse conditions; by launching and seeing through *Operation Buckland*,

– one of the best examples of all-arms cooperation during the War – has been placed at a higher pedestal.

Recommended for all libraries catering to military tastes.

*Lieutenant Colonel A K Sharma (Retd)*

**Nimitz Class.** *Patrick Robinson* (London : Arrow Books, 1997), pp.457 £5.99, ISBN 0-09-9225 62-X.

Over the years a genre of writers, providing a novelist's point of view to the dialectics of science of war, in the process simplifying this arcane field and providing creative insights to defence specialists the World over, have come to occupy the bestseller lists. Leading these authors is Tom Clancy, whose 'Op Center series' is claimed to have provided new ideas to military leaders in the West. Patrick Robinson, a journalist's maiden venture in this field, also falls in this category.

The story hinges on disappearance of the nuclear powered aircraft carrier, *USS Thomas Jefferson*, at sea. What follows is high drama, as the author through his protagonist, Bill Baldrige, takes us through numerous loops and twists in the plot, from the Scottish coast to Baltic ports in an enthralling journey with authentically portrayed carrier and submarine operations. The book succinctly highlights the complex nature of modern naval warfare and the hard and enduring grind that precedes modern military competence, for technology has increased rather than reduced the need for training. The subtle linkages between religion, military and finance and the more easily identifiable threats from proliferation of weapons of mass destruction have also been factored in the plot to make it a per-spicious effort.

The novel unravels the threats faced by large platforms as aircraft carriers to sneak attacks by submarines. When such vessels are nuclear powered and the weapons used nuclear tipped, the consequent holocaust will be spatially magnified. Break up of the Soviet Union has also rendered many of its military assets vulnerable to subversion by ideological adversaries as well as those wielding money power. Hopefully such fictional works will not only provide insights to the soldier but also contribute to reducing the profligating streak of self destruction in man.

*Colonel Rahul K Bhonsle*

**"Arnhem".** By Christopher Hibbert (UK : The Windrush Press Little Window, 1998 Reprint), pp. 207, £ 10.99, ISBN 1-900624-10-9.

A Military Cross winner, Hibbert an infantry officer, was wounded twice in action in World War II. Having seen battle at close quarters and being a gifted writer, he went on to chronicle it with rare insight, clarity and of course much distinction. His recounting of military history has always been very popular and "Arnhem" particularly so.

The battle itself was one of the epic tragedies of the War like Dunkirk or Dieppe. It was planned on inaccurate intelligence, its conduct was a litany of miscalculations and disasters; and it resulted in the defeat and withdrawal of the badly mauled British 1st Airborne Division from the precarious bridgehead of Arnhem in Holland. Be as it might, it was an ennobling experience for the troops involved. There was as much valour as chivalry on both sides. With the benefit of hindsight, and interviews with survivors, the author has been able to piece together the various actions in a scrupulously fair manner. All this has been recounted blow by blow in the first two sections of this book, which are as engrossing as a war novel. It was also apparent in the classic war-movie 'A Bridge Too Far'.

Hibbert excels himself in the last chapter titled "The Lost Prize". He dissects *Op Market Garden* in its totality. German Commanders like von Runstedt, Speidel and Blumentritt have gone on record saying that had Montgomery's plan been fully backed by Eisenhower, the bridge indeed would have not been too far and the prize of daring to go, bagged. The landings were not concentrated, the Allies were not aware of the German II Panzer Korps near Arnhem, the bad flying conditions hampered re-supply of the para-dropped British and interdiction of German columns closing in on to the battle zone; and the drop had taken place far too early and ahead of the advancing 33 Corps. The landing zones were too far from the objectives, and the troops lost too much time in securing the same. All these conjectures have been analysed with great expertise by a seasoned soldier, in the concluding portions of this very inspiring work.

*Lieutenant Colonel A K Sharma (Retd)*

**Capital Cities at War : Paris, London, Berlin 1914-1919.** (First Pb Edn) Edited by Jay Winter and Jean Louis Robert (Cambridge, UK : Cambridge University, Press 1999), pp.622, £ 17.95, 0-521-66814-X.

An exhaustive study of the conditions in the three capitals – London,

Paris and Berlin – during the War of 1914-18. The authors assess this from the point of casualties, profiteering, food and coal supplies for heating; the housing shortage amongst labour and the middle classes and the effect of availability of health services.

For a casual reader the cartoons of profiteers would be amusing. This is the first volume of the study. Each of the capitals supplied about a million soldiers. The casualties of the British and the French were about one in eight, while the Germans lost one sixth of the number. The Berliners thus made a greater sacrifice. Though there was an increase in the cost of living in all the three countries; Berlin suffered the most and faced labour unrest. Black market flourished despite food and coal rationing. The cold winter of 1916-17 caused many deaths. There was a higher rate of illegitimate children in Paris and Berlin. The infant mortality rates also went up. Deaths from tuberculosis amongst females was higher in Paris and Berlin than in London.

The findings point to the inadequacies of social systems which adversely effected the war waging capacity particularly of the Germans.

*Major General Partap Narain (Retd)*

**Know Thine Enemy : A Spy's Journey into Revolutionary Iran.** By Edward Shirley (Boulder Colorado : Westview Press, 1999), pp.247, \$ 15.00, ISBN 0-8133-3588-4.

The title of book is deceptive. It is in fact the story of CIA agent Edward Shirley's one time foray into Iran, the most vociferous enemy of the United States at that time. Edward Shirley could never enter Iran whilst in service. The CIA only recruited native-born Iranians to spy for them. Shirley, obsessed with finding out the goings on in Iran, smuggled himself into the country inside a box in a friend's truck. The narrative besides giving the details about the author's surreptitious entry, stay and exit into and out of Iran also labours on his fascination for Iran and all things Iranian. In doing so he outlines the contours of Persian history, geography, language, politics, religion and society.

An interesting book for those who wish to know more about Iran but of little interest to a military reader who would want to know more about the mechanics of gauging the enemy.

*Major General Ian Cardozo (Retd)*



**A Guide to Health.** By Dr ML Batra (New Delhi : Mrs & Cdr Batra), pp.300, Rs. 275.00.

The contemporary era is characterised with improvements in material gains that make life more complex and the human beings are losing a good environment to live in. How to live a life with good health has become an obsession with most of us. Presented in exceptional detail this book guides the reader on how to maintain good health through various methods and means at his or her disposal. Most parts of human anatomy are covered in reasonable detail with lucid description of their functioning as well as remedies that can help to keep ourselves healthy and strong.

The outstanding aspect of the book is its subtle lure towards naturopathy that is acknowledged by experts in medical world as simple, safe and the best possible remedy. It is widely advocated by doctors for cure of any disease provided human body responds to this nature of cure. The book also features preventive measures for various diseases that are common and require immediate attention. This feature presented elaborately becomes specially relevant taking into consideration the exponential spread of cardiac and respiratory related diseases.

The language is lucid but at places needs simplification and repetition should be avoided in the later editions. This book can be immensely popular if brought out in paperback and in concise pocket edition featuring explanatory diagrams.

*Captain Rajiv Ojha*

**Dean Rusk – Defending the American Mission Abroad.** By Thomas W Zeller (Wilmington, USA : Scholarly Resources Inc., 2000), pp.233, \$50.00, ISBN 0-8420-2686-X.

The book provides an illuminating commentary of the events that have led to creation of an uni-polar world. As a Neo-Wilsonian, Rusk pursued the dreams of the man who gave the world his fourteen-point programme towards creation of a lasting world peace. After the First World War, those points resulted in creation of the League of Nations that later got disbanded and paved the way for United Nations. It was here that "Rusk hoped to use the organisation to secure Wilsonian ideals." "Law – the setting of international standards of conduct and morality – was the key for Rusk." That his principles were subsumed under national security prerogatives by the late 1940s did not turn Rusk from the fight for international law. He still vigorously opposed colonialism. Faced with imperial powers determined to retain their colonies and with a Secretary of State (Acheson) who cared

little about stopping them, Rusk campaigned for the independence of colonies under the guidance of the United Nations. For him, how could the United States and the United Nations promote principles of freedom and democracy while denying self-governance to a majority of the world's people? Rusk also wanted the United Nations to oversee the Marshal Plan, an ambitious programme for European economic recovery involving \$17 billion in US aid.

He was famous for his loyalty to higher-ranking officials, even when he disagreed with them. The experience taught him one lesson: aggressors must be confronted so that the dream of world peace and harmony can be achieved. Many "remember Rusk as a myopic Cold Warrior... During his time, U.S. liberal values of protecting the weak and poor, of providing social justice and equality to all, reached their pinnacle of influence." "Rusk viewed his association with President Kennedy as professionally close, but he was personally intimate to Johnson."

The book makes very interesting reading. And it can be treated, as an inside view to the process of policy making and the effort required by the individuals determined to achieve it. Long hours of work is just one of the important steps. "His was the quintessential success story of overcoming odds by diligence, devotion, irrepressible optimism, compatibility with his peers, impressive intellect and, above all, loyalty to principles."

*Commander Suresh Malhotra*

## **Additions to the USI Library for the Quarter - Ending June 2000\***

(The books reviewed in January-March 2000 issue have been added to the Library during this quarter but not shown in this list)

### **AUTOBIOGRAPHY**

1. Grim Wood  
Ethel St Clair      **My Three Years in Manipur.** New Delhi :  
Gyan Publishing House, Rs.250.00, ISBN  
81-212-0135-7
2. Bajwa, K S (Maj Gen)      **The Falcon in My Name: A Soldier's Diary.**  
New Delhi : South Asia Publications,  
Rs.495.00, ISBN 81-7433-022-4

### **ECONOMY / CORRUPTION**

3. Naunihal Singh      **Developing Countries: The Impact of  
Corruption and Economic Growth.** New  
Delhi : Authorpress, Rs.575.00, ISBN 81-  
7273-023-3
4. Turner, Colin      **The Info E-conomy: Business Strategies  
for Competing in the Digital Age.**  
London : Kogan Page, Rs.995.00,  
ISBN 0-7494-2960-7
5. Vasudeva, P K      **WTO : India and World Trade Organisation  
: Planning and Development.** New Delhi:  
APH Publishing Corporation, Rs.800.00,  
ISBN 81-7648-205-6

### **FORCES' UPDATE**

6. Seth, Vijay      **The Flying Machines: Indian Air Force  
1933-1999.** New Delhi : Seth  
Communications, Rs.250.00, ISBN 81-  
901153-0-8
7. Kemp, Paul      **Underwater Warriors.** UK : Brockhampton  
Press, 1996, £ 20.00, ISBN 1-86019-991-7

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\*Due to paucity of space only a limited number of books have been intimated here.

**INDIA - DEFENCE AND FOREIGN POLICY**

8. Damodaran, A K
9. Biju, M R
10. Jha, Nalini Kant
11. Mohan, Sulakshan  
(Major)
12. Pradhan, S K
13. Hasan, Mushirul
14. Subbian
15. Rai, Rahul
16. Milton-Edwards  
Beverley

**Beyond Autonomy: Roots of India's Foreign Policy.** New Delhi : Somaiya Publications, Rs.350.00, ISBN 81-7039-241-1

**India's Foreign Policy : Towards a New Millennium.** New Delhi : National Publishing House, Rs.800.00, ISBN 81-86803-74-2

**India's Foreign Policy in a Changing World: Essays in Honour of Prof Bimal Prasad.** New Delhi : South Asian Publishers, Rs.400.00, ISBN 81-7003-243-1

**India's Nuclear Leap.** New Delhi : Indian Publishers Distributors, Rs.395.00, ISBN 81-7341-161-1

**New Dimensions in Indo-Burmese Relations.** New Delhi : Rajat Publications, Rs.500.00, ISBN 81-87317-71-X

**INDIA - HISTORY**

**Inventing Boundaries: Gender, Politics and the Partition of India.** New Delhi : Oxford University Press, Rs.595.00, ISBN 019-565103-0

**HUMAN RIGHTS**

**Human Rights Complaints Systems: International and Regional.** New Delhi : Deep & Deep Publications, Rs.550.00, ISBN 81-7629-233-8

**Human Rights: U N Initiatives.** New Delhi : Authorpress, Rs.500.00, ISBN 81-7273-027-6

**INTERNATIONAL POLITICS**

**Contemporary Politics in the Middle East.** Cambridge, U K : Polity Press, £ 14.99, ISBN 0-7456-1472-8

17. Wright, J W, Jr. and L Drake      **Economic and Political Impediments to Middle East Peace Process: Critical Questions and Alternative Scenarios.** London : Macmillan Press, £ 50.00, ISBN 0-333-67899-0
18. Shlaim, Avi      **The Iron Wall: Israel and the Arab World.** London : Allen Lane, £ 25.00, ISBN 0-71-399410-X

**REGIONAL / STATE POLITICS**

19. E Porter, Michael Hirotaka Takeuchi and Sakakibara      **Can Japan Compete ?** London : Macmillan, Rs.995.00, ISBN 0-333-78658-0
20. Hippel, Karin von      **Democracy by Force: US Military Intervention in Post Cold War World.** Cambridge : Cambridge University Press, Rs.470.00, ISBN 0-521-65955-8
21. Panagariya, BL      **Kashmir Accession to Kargil.** New Delhi: National Publishing House, Rs.300.00, ISBN 81-86803-77-7
22. Jina, Prem Singh      **Ladakh: Past and Present.** New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, Rs.700.00, ISBN 81-212-0654-5
23. ISEAS      **Regional Outlook in South East Asia 2000-2001.** Singapore : Institute of South East Asian Studies, \$ 19.90, ISBN 981-230-087-2
24. Sharma, S      **The Baltic Nationalism: Post World War II Analysis.** New Delhi : Rajat Publications, Rs.400.00, ISBN 81-87317-63-9
25. Mukarji, Aparitam      **The War in Sri Lanka: Unending Conflict?** New Delhi : Har-Anand, Rs.250.00, ISBN 81-241-0746-7

**SECURITY ISSUES**

26. Croft, Stuart and  
Terry Terriff

**Critical Reflections on Security and Change.** London : Frank Cass, £16.50, ISBN 0-7146-8061-3

27. Roy-Choudhary

**India's Maritime Security.** New Delhi : Knowledge World, Rs.550.00, ISBN 81-86019-29-4

28. Herring, Eric

**Preventing the Use of National Missile Defense.** London : Frank Cass, £ 16.50, ISBN 0-7146-8097-4

29. Saighal, Vinod  
(Maj Gen)

**Restructuring South Asian Security.** New Delhi : Manas, Rs.495.00, ISBN 81-7049-121-5

30. Khullar, Darshan  
(Brig)

**Security, Peace and Honour.** New Delhi: Manas, Rs.495.00, ISBN 81-7049-084-7

**TERRORISM**

31. Singh, Sudhir Kumar

**Terrorism:A Global Phenomenon.** New Delhi: Authorpress, Rs.525.00, ISBN 81-7273-026-8

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[www.members.tripod.com/usiofindia/htmlpages/Main.htm](http://www.members.tripod.com/usiofindia/htmlpages/Main.htm)

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